PLAINE-MANS PATH-WAY To HEAVEN.

Wherein every man may cleerely *see whether he shall be saved or damned.*

Set forth Dialogue-wise, for the better vnderstanding of the simple.

By ARTH. DENT, Preacher of the Word of God at South-Shoobery, in Essex.

The twentieth Edition.

Corrected and amended: with a Table of all the principall matters; and three prayers necessary to be vsed in priuate families hereunto added.

ZEPH. 3.5.

Euery morning the Lord bringeth his iudgements to light, he faileth not: but the wicked will not learne to be ashamed.

LONDON,
Printed by *H. L.* for *George Latham*, in Paul's Church-yard, at the signe of the Bishops head. 1629.

THE CONTENTS OF this Dialogue.

FIrst, it sheweth mans misery in nature, with the meanes of recouery.

Secondly, it sharpely inueigheth against the iniquitie of the time, and common corruptions of the world.

Thirdly, it sheweth the markes of the children of God, and of the Reprobates, with the apparent signes of Saluation and Damnation.

Fourthly, it declareth how hard a thing it is to enter into life, and how few shall enter.

Fiftly, it layeth open the ignorance of the world, with the obiections of the same.

Last of all, it publisheth and proclaimeth the sweet promises of the Gospell, with the abundant mercies of God to all that repent, believe, and truely turne vnto him.

To the Right Worshipfull *Sir* IVLIVS CÆSAR, Knight, one of the Masters of the Request *to the Kings Maiesty, Iudge of the high Court of* Admiraltie, and Master of Saint Catharines:

A. D. Wisheth all good things in Christ Iesus.

Hauing finished (Right Worshipfull) and made readie for the Presse this little Dialogue, I bethought me (sith the common manner of all that write any Bookes in this age, is to dedicate the same to one or other ofgr eat place) to whom I might dedicate these my poore labours. At last, I did resolue with my selfe, none to be more fit than your Worship: both in regard of some affinitie in the flesh, as also because of those manifold good parts wherewith the Almightie hath endued you. Hauing therefore none other thing to present your Worship withall (in token of a thankefull heart for your courtesies shewed towards me) behold, I doe here send vnto you this third fruite of my labours published. Most humbly beseeching you to take it in good worth: not weighing the value of the thing, which is of no value, but the simple and good

mind & meaning of the giuer. This worke doth sharply reprouе and vrge the world of sinne, and therefore is like to finde many deadly enemies, which with cruell hatred will most eagerly pursue it vnto death. Zoilus *also and his fellowes, I know will bitterly carpe at it. Therefore it flyeth vnto your Worship for protection, and humbly desireth to take Sanctuary vnder your wings. Wherefore I humbly intreate you to take vpon you the patronage & defence of it, that by your meanes it may be deliuered both from the calumnious obloquies of euill disposed persons, and also from the worlds malignitie: so as it may take no iniurie. And concerning this little volume, the summe of the matter of it you shall finde in the Epistle to the Reader. As concerning the manner, here is no great matter in learning, wit, art, eloquence, or ingenious inuention; (for I haue herein specially respected the ignorant and vulgar sort, whose edification I doe chiefly aime at) yet somewhat there is, which may concerne the learned, and giue them some contentment. What soeuer it be, I leaue it with your Worship, beseeching you to giue it entertainement. And so I doe most humbly take my leaue, commending both your selfe, your good wife, and your whole family to the mercifull protection of the euerliuing God. From* South-Shoobery *in* Essex, Aprill 10. *Anno Domini*, 1601.

Your worships to command in the Lord,

ARTHVR DENT.

THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

GEntle Reader, ſeeing my little Sermon of Repentance, ſome few yeares ſince publiſhed, hath bin ſo well accepted of: I haue, for thy further good, publiſhed this Dialogue, being the third fruite of my labour: wiſhing to it the like ſucceſſe, that God thereby may haue the glorie, and thou, who art the Reader, comfort. I haue, in one part of this Dialogue, produced ſome of the ancient writers, and ſome of the wiſe Heathen alſo, to teſtifie vpon their oath in their owne language: and to beare witneſſe of the ouglineſſe of ſome vices, which we in this age make light of: which I wiſh may not be offenſiue to any. In other parts of this work I doe in a manner relinquiſh them. But in this caſe I haue in my weake iudgement thought them to be of ſome good vſe, to ſhew forth thus much: that if we doe not in time repent, forſake our ſins, and ſeeke after God, both the ancient Chriſtian Fathers (whoſe eyes ſaw not that we ſee,

nor their eares heard that wee heare) yea the very heathen also shall rise vp in iudgement against vs. Let none therefore stumble at it. But if any man doe, let him remember I am in a Dialogue, not in a Sermon. I write to all of all sorts. I speake not to some few of one sort. But that which is done herein, is not much more than that of the Apostle (*As some of your owne Poets haue said. Act.*17.) which is warrantable. One thing, deare Christian, I pray thee let mee begge of thee; to wit, that thou wouldest not reade two or three leaues of this Book: and so cast it from thee: but that thou wouldest reade it thorowout, euen to the end. For I doe assure thee, if there bee any thing in it werth the reading, it is bestowed in the latter part thereof, and most of all towards the conclusion. Bee not discouraged therefore at the harshnesse of the beginning: but looke for smoother matter in the middest, and most smooth in the perclose, and winde-vp of all. For this Dialogue hath in it, not the nature of a Tragedie, which is begun with ioy, and ended with sorrow: but a Comedy, which is begun with sorrow, and ended with ioy. This Book meddleth not at all with any controuersies in the Church, or any thing in the state Ecclesiasticall, but onely entreth into a controuersie with Satan and sinne. It is contriued into sixe principall heads. First,

it

it sheweth mans miserie in nature, with the meanes of recouery. Secondly, it sharpely inueigheth against the iniquity of the time, and common corruptions of the world. Thirdly, it sheweth the markes of the Children of God, and of the Reprobates: together with the apparent signes of Saluation and Damnation. Fourthly, it declareth how hard a thing it is to enter into life: and how few shall enter. Fiftly, it laieth open the ignorance of the world, with the obiections of the same. Last of all it publisheth and proclaimeth the sweete promises of the Gospell, with the abundant mercies of God to all that repent, beleeue, and truely turne vnto him. The Author of all blessing giue a blessing vnto it. The God of peace, which brought againe from the dead our Lord Iesus, the great Shepheard of the sheep, through the bloud of the euerlasting couenant, make vs perfect in all good workes, sanctifie vs thorowout, amend all our imperfections, and keepe vs blamelesse vntill the day of his most gloricus appearing. Amen.

Thine in the Lord.

A. D.

Book

Johannes Wright

Sum e Libris

The plaine Mans Pathway to Heauen.

Interlocutors.
- *Theologus*, a Diuine.
- *Philagathus*, an Honest man.
- *Asuetus*, an Ignorant man.
- *Antilegon*, a Cauiller.

Philagathus.

WEll met, good Master *Theologus.*

Theologus. What! mine old friend Philagathus? I am glad to see you in good health.

Phil. Are you walking, Sir, here all alone in this pleasant meadow?

Theol. Yea, so; I take some pleasure at this time of the yeare to walke abroad in the fields for my recreation, both to take the fresh ayre, and to heare the sweet singing of birds.

Phil. Indeed, Sir, it is very comfortable, especially now in this pleasant Month of May;

and thankes be to God, hitherto we haue had a very forward ſpring, and as kindly a ſeaſon as came this ſeuen yeare.

Theol. God doth abound towards vs in mercies; Oh that wee could abound towards him in thankeſgiuing.

Phil. I pray you ſir, what a clock hold you it?

Theol. I take it to be a little paſt one, for I came but euen now from dinner.

Phil. But behold, yonder come two men towards vs; what be they, I pray you?

Theol. They bee a couple of neighbours of the next Pariſh; the one of them is called Aſunetus, who in very deede is a very ignorant man in Gods matters; and the other is called Antilegon, a notable Atheiſt, and cauiller againſt all goodneſſe.

Phil. If they be ſuch, it were good for vs to take ſome occaſion to ſpeak of matters of religion: it may be we ſhall do them ſome good.

Theol. You haue made a good motion: I like it well. If therefore you will miniſter ſome matter, and moue ſome queſtions, I will be ready to anſwer in the beſt ſort I can.

Phil. But ſtay ſir, lo, here they come vpon vs.

Theol. Welcome neighbours, welcome. How doe you Aſunetus, and you Antilegon?

Aſun. Well, God be thanked: and wee are glad to ſee your maſterſhip in good health.

Theol.

Theol. What make both of you here at this time of the day? There is some occasion, I am sure, draweth you this way.

Asun. Indeed, Sir, we haue some little businesse; for we came to talke with one of your Parish, about a Cow we should buy of him.

Theol. Hath my neighbour a Cow to sell?

Antil. We are told he hath a very good one to sell; but I am affraid, at this time of the year, we shall finde deere ware of her.

Theol. How deere? What doe you thinke a very good Cow may be worth?

Antil. A good Cow indeed, at this time of the yeare, is worth very neare foure pound; which is a great price.

Theol. It is a very great price indeed.

Phil. I pray you, *M. Theologus*, leaue off this talking of Kine, and worldly matters, and let vs enter into some speech of matters of religion, whereby wee may doe good, and take good one of another.

Theol. You say well. But it may be these mens businesse requireth haste, so as they cannot stay.

Asun. No, Sir, we are in no great haste, we can stay two or three houres; for the daies are long: if we dispatch our businesse by night, it will serue our turne well enough.

Theol. Then if it will please you to walke

to ponder Oake tree, there is a goodly Arbour, and handsome seates, where we may all sit in the shadow, and conferre of heauenly matters.

Asun. With a good will, Sir.

Phil. Come then, let vs goe.

Asun. This is a goodly Arbour indeed, and here be handsome seates.

Theol. Sit you all downe, I pray you. Now friend Philagathus, if you haue any questions to moue of matters of Religion, we are all readie to heare you.

Phil. It may be these men are somewhat ignorant of the very principles of Religion; and therfore I thinke it not amisse to begin there, and so to make way for further matters.

Theol. I pray you doe so then.

Phil. First then, I demand of you, in what state all men are borne by nature.

Theol. In the state of condemnation, as appeareth, Ephes. 2. 3. We are by nature the children of wrath, as well as others. And againe it is written: Behold, I was borne in iniquity, and in sin hath my mother conceiued me.

Psal. 51. 5.

Phil. Is it euery mans case? Are not Dukes and Nobles, Lords and Ladies, and the great Potentates of the earth exempted from it?

Theol. No surely: it is the common case of all, both high and lowe, rich and poore, as it

is written: What is man, that he should bee cleane; and he that is borne of a woman, that he should be iust?

Phil. From whence commeth it, that all men are borne in so wofull a case?

Theol. **From the fall of Adam, who thereby hath not onely wrapt himselfe, but all his posterity, in extreame and vnspeakable misery; as the Apostle saith:** By one mans disobedience, many were made sinners. And by the offence of one, the fault came on all men to condemnation. Rom. 5. 12

Phil. What reason is there that we all should thus be punished for another mans offence?

Theol. **Because we were then all in him, and are now all of him: that is, we are so descended out of his loynes, that of him we haue not onely receiued our naturall and corrupt bodies, but also by propagation haue inherited his foule corruptions, as it were by hereditary right.**

Phil. But for as much as some haue dreamed that *Adam* by his fall hurt himselfe onely, and not his posterity; and that we haue his corruption deriued vnto vs by imitation, and not by propagation; therefore I pray you shew this more plainly.

Theol. **Euen as great personages, by committing of treason, do not only hurt themselues,**

but also staine their bloud, and disgrace their posterity: for the children of such Nobles are disinherited, whose bloud is attainted, till they be restored againe by Act of Parliament. Euen so our bloud being attainted by Adams transgression, we can inherit nothing of right till we be restored by Christ.

Phila. Doth this hereditarie infection and contagion ouer-spread our whole nature?

Theol. Yes truly, it is vniuersall, extending it selfe throughout the whole man, both soule and body, both reason, vnderstanding, will and affections: for the Scriptures auouch, that wee are dead in sinnes and trespasses.

Eph. 2. 1.
Col. 1. 21.
Col 2. 13.

Phil. How vnderstand you that?

Theol. Not of the deadnesse of the body, or the naturall faculties of the soule, but of the spirituall faculties.

Phil. Did *Adam* then lose his nature, and destroy it by his fall? Or is our nature taken away by his fall?

Theol. Not so: Our nature was corrupted thereby, but not destroyed: for still there remaineth in our nature, reason, vnderstanding, will, and affections, and we are not as a block or a stocke; but by Adams disobedience wee are blemished, maimed, and spoyled of all ability to vnderstand aright, or to will and doe aright:

aright: as it is written; Wee are not sufficient of our selues, to think any thing as of our selues: but our sufficiency is of God. And againe: It is God which worketh in you both the will and the deed; euen of his good pleasure. And as concerning the other point, Saint Iames saith: That all men are made after the similitude of God: meaning thereby, that there remaine some reliques and parts of Gods image euen in the most wicked men: as reason, vnderstanding, &c. so that our nature was not wholly destroyed.

2.Cor.5.

Phil.2.1

Iames 3.

Phil. Then you think there be some sparkes and remnants left in vs still of that excellent image of God, which was in our first creation.

Theol. I thinke so indeed: and it may plainly appeare vnto vs in the wise speeches and writings of Heathen Poets and Philosophers: in all which we may, as by certaine ruines, perceiue what was the excellent frame and building of mans creation.

Phil. Can a man please God in any thing which he doth, so long as hee continueth in the state of nature?

Theol. No, not in any thing: for till we bee in the state of grace, euen our best actions are sinfull: as preaching, prayer, almes-deeds, &c. as it is written: Who can bring a cleane thing out

Iob 14.

out of that which is vncleane? *Iob* 14.4. The
Rom.8.8. Apostle also saith: They that are in the flesh, cannot please God: that is, such as are still in their naturall corruption. And our Lord Iesus
Mat.7.16. himselfe saith: Doe men gather Grapes of thornes, or Figges of thistles? Meaning thereby, that meere naturall men can bring forth no fruits acceptable to God.

Phil. This is a very harsh and hard saying: I pray you, for my further instruction, make it more plaine.

Theol. Men in the state of nature may doe those things which of themselues are good, but they doe vtterly faile in the manner of doing them: they do them not as they should be done: that is, in faith, loue, zeale, conscience of obedience, &c. neyther yet with any cheerfulnesse, delight, or feeling, but euen as it were forcing themselues to doe the outward actions. Thus did Cain sacrifice, the Pharisees pray, Ananias and Sapphira giue almes, and the Iewes offer vp their oblations and burnt offerings.

Phil. Haue men any true sight, or liuely and sound feeling of this misery and wofull estate, so long as they be meerly naturall?

Theol. No surely, but are altogether blinded and hardned in it, being nothing desirous to come out of it, but doe greatly please themselues in it, and can hardly be perswaded, that

they

they are in any such woefull case: as appeareth plainely in the example of that Ruler, who being commanded, or rather required of our Saiour Christ to keep the commandements, answered: All these haue I kept from my youth. Luk.18.21
And againe, although the Church of Laodicea was wretched, miserable, poore, blinde, and naked; yet shee thought her selfe rich, increased with goods, and wanting nothing. It followeth then, that so long as men are in the state of nature, they haue no true sight and feeling of their miseries.

Phil. Do you not think that all men, being meerly natural, are vnder the curse of the law?

Theol. Yes certainly: and not onely so, but also vnder the very tyranny and dominion of Satan, though they know it not, see it not, feele it not, or perceiue it not: for all that are not in Christ, are vnder the curse of the Law, and the power of darknesse and the diuell: as appeareth, Ephes.2.2. where the diuell is called the Prince that ruleth in the aire, euen the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. In another place he is called the god of this world, who blindeth the eyes of all vnbeleuers. 2.Cor.4.4. And againe, it is said, that all men naturally are in his snare, being taken captiue of him at his will. 2.Tim.2.26.

Phil. Few will be perswaded of that; they will

will say, they defie the diuell, and thank God they were neuer troubled with him.

Theol. Their hot words do nothing amend the matter: for the diuell is no more driuen away with words, than with holy water: but he sitteth in the tongues & mouthes, nay, possesseth the very hearts and intrals of thousands which say they defie him, and are not troubled with him; as appeareth manifestly by their particular actions, and the whole course of their life.

Phil. Me thinks, if the diuell do so inwardly possesse the hearts and consciences of men, they should haue some sight and feeling of it.

Theol. The working of the diuell in mens soules (being an inuisible spirit) is with such inconceiuable sleight and crafty conueyance, that men in the state of nature cannot possibly feele it, or perceiue it: for how can a blind man see, or a dead man feele?

Phil. Shew this more plainly.

Theol. Euen as a crafty Iuggler doth so prestigiat and blind mens outward senses by the delusions of Sathan, that they thinke they see that which they see not, and feele that which they feele not: euen so the diuell doth so delude and bewitch our inward senses, and the naturall faculties of our soules, that wee, hauing a myst cast before our eyes, thinke we are that which we are not, see that which we see not, and

feele

feele that which wee feele not. For the deepe cunning of Sathan lyeth in this; that hee can giue vs our deaths wound, and wee shall neuer know who hurts vs.

Phil. Few will beleeue this to be true.

Theol. True indeed: for few will beleeue the Scriptures: few will beleeue this, because few feele it. Where it is not felt, it can hardly bee beleeued: only the Elect do feele it, and therefore only the Elect doe beleeue it. As for all others, they are the very prentizes and bond-slaues of the diuell, which is a thousand times worse than to be a galley-slaue.

Phil. How long doe men continue in this wofull state of nature, being vnder the curse of the law, and the very slauery of Satan and sin?

Theol. Till they be regenerate and borne againe, and so brought into the state of grace; as our Lord Iesus saith: Except a man be borne againe, he cannot see the Kingdome of God. Iohn 3.3.

Phil. Do not many die, and depart this life, before they be borne again, and consequently, before they be brought into the state of grace?

Theol. Yes, no doubt, thousands: for many liue forty or threescore yeares in this world, and in the end dye, and goe out of this life, before they know wherefore they came into it: as it is written; My people perish for want of knowledge. Hos. 4.6.

Phil.

Phil. What may we thinke of such?

Theol. I quake to speake what I thinke: for surely I doe not see how such can bee saued: I speake not now of infants and children, whereof some no doubt are saued by vertue of the promise, & couenant, through the election of grace.

Phil It seemeth then that you thinke none can be saued, but those onely which are borne againe.

Theol. I thinke so indeed.

Phil. I pray you tell me what the same regeneration and new birth is, whereof you speak.

Theol. It is a renuing and repairing of the corrupted and decayed estate of our soules: As it is written; Be ye changed by the renuing of your minde. And againe: Be renued in the spirit of your minde.

Rom. 12.
Eph. 4. 23.

Phil. Explane this more fully.

Theol. Euen as the wilde Oliffe retaineth his old nature, till it be graffed into the swéte Oliffe, but afterward is partaker of a new nature: so we, till we be graffed into Christ, retaine our old nature, but afterward are turned into a new creature: as it is written, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

2. Cor. 5. 17.

Phil. I vnderstand not what you say.

Theol. You must know this, that as there is a naturall birth of the whole man; so there is also a spirituall birth of the whole man.

Phil.

Phil. How is that?

Theol. When as the naturall faculties of the soule, as reason, vnderstanding, will and affections, and the members of the body also, are so sanctified, purged, and rectified by grace, that wee vnderstand, will, and desire that which is good.

Phil. Cannot a man will and desire that which is good, before he be borne againe?

Theol. No more than a dead man can desire the good things of this life. For mans will is not free to consent vnto good, till it be enlarged by grace: and an vnregenerate man doth sinne necessarily, though not by constraint. For mans will is free from constraint (for it sinneth of it selfe) but not from thraldome vnto sinne.

Phil. You speake, as if a man could doe no other thing but sinne, till the new worke bee wrought in him.

Theol. That is mine opinion indeed. For a man & his flesh are all one, till he be regenerate: they agree together like man & wife, they ioyne together in all euill, they liue and dye together: for when the flesh perisheth, the man perisheth.

Phil. Is not this regeneration a changing, or rather destroying of humane nature?

Theol. Nothing lesse: it is neyther an abolishing, nor changing of the substance of body or soule, or any of the faculties thereof, but

onely

onely a rectifying and repairing of them by remouing the corruption.

Phil. Is then our naturall corruption so purged and quite remoued by the power of grace, as that it remaineth not at all in vs, but that we are wholly freed of it?

Theol. Not so: For the reliques and remnants of our old nature, which the Scripture calleth the old man, doe hang about vs, and dwell in vs, euen vntill our dying day; as it is plainely proued in the ten last Verses of the seuenth to the Romans.

Phil. Then you affirme, that this new man, or new worke of grace and regeneration, is vnperfect in this life.

Theol. Yea: for the new creature, or new worke of grace, can neuer be fully fashioned in this life, but is alwayes in fashioning. And as our faith and knowledge in this life are vnperfect: so is our regeneration and sanctification.

Phil. You said before, that the regeneration or new birth is of the whole man: which speech seemeth to imply, that the new work of grace is entire and perfect.

Theol. You mistake the matter. For although the new birth is vniuersall, and of the whole man, yet it is not entire, perfect, pure, and without mixture or corruption. For it is written: The flesh lusteth against the spirit, & the

spirit

ſpirit againſt the fleſh. The Apoſtle alſo prayeth, that the Theſſalonians may bée ſanctified throughout, in ſpirit, ſoule, and body.

Phil. This ſeemeth very obſcure, I pray you make it more plaine.

Theol. You muſt note this, that the new worke and the old, fleſh and ſpirit, grace and corruption, are ſo intermingledly ioyned together in all the faculties of the ſoule and body, as that the one doth euer fight againſt the other.

Phil. But tell me, I pray you, how you vnderſtand this intermingling of grace and corruption in the ſoule. Do you mean, that grace is placed in one part of the ſoule, & corruption in another, ſo as they be ſundred in place?

Theol. No, that is not my meaning: but this, that they be ioyned and mingled together (as I ſaid) in and throughout the whole man. For the minde or vnderſtanding part is not one part fleſh, and another part ſpirit; but the whole minde is fleſh, and the whole minde is ſpirit, partly one and partly another. The ſame is to be ſaid of will and affections.

Phil. I pray you expreſſe it more plainly.

Theol. Euen as the ayre in the dawning of the day, is not wholly light, or wholly darke, as at midnight, or at none day; neither is it in one part light, and in another part darke: but the whole ayre is partly light, and partly darke

throwout:

thoroughout: and as in a vessell of luke-warme water, the water it selfe is not onely hote, nor onely cold, but heat and cold are mixed together in every part of the water: so is the flesh and the spirit mingled together in the soule of man. And this is the cause why these two contrary qualities fight together.

Phil. Out of doubt this doctrine of regeneration is a very great mysterie.

Theol. Yes certainly, it is a secret of secrets, which the wise of this world cannot comprehend.

Phil. Some thinke, that courtesie, kindnesse, good nurture, good nature, and good education, are regeneration, and that courteous and good natured men must needs be saued.

Theol. They are greatly deceiued: for these things do not necessarily accompany saluation, but are to bee found in such as are altogether prophane and irreligious: yet wee are to loue such good outward qualities, and the men in whom we finde them.

Phil. What say you then to learning, wit, and policie? are not these things of the essence of religion, and proue a regeneration?

Theol. No, no: for they be externall gifts, which may be in the most wicked men; as in Papists, Heathen Poets, and Philosophers: yet wee are greatly to reuerence learned and wise men, although the new and inward worke

be

be not as yet wrought: for that is onely of God, that is from aboue.

Phil. The common people do attribute much to learning and policy: for they will say, Such a man is learned and wise, and knoweth the Scripture as well as any of them all, and yet hee doth not thus & thus.

Theol. It is one thing to know the History and Letter of the Scriptures, and another thing to beléeue and féele the power therof in the heart; which is only from the sanctifying spirit, which none of the wise of this world can haue.

Phil. It is a common opinion, that if a man hold the truth in iudgement, be no Papist, or Hereticke, but leadeth an honest ciuill life, then he must of necessity be saued.

Theol. That followeth not: for many come so farre, which yet notwithstanding haue not the inward touch.

Phil. That seemeth strange. For many will say, As long as they be neither whore nor theefe, nor spotted with such like grosse sins, they trust in God they shall be saued.

Theol. They erre, not knowing the Scriptures. For many thousands are in great danger of losing their soules for euer, which are frée from such notorious and horrible vices: nay, many which in the world are counted good

honest men, good true dealers, good neighbours, and good Townes-men.

Asun. I pray you, Sir, giue me leaue a little. I haue heard all your speech hitherto, and I like reasonably well of it; but now I can forbear no longer; my conscience vrgeth me to speak: For me thinks you go too far, you go beyond your learning in this, that you condemne good neighbours and good Townsmen. You say, many such men are in danger of losing their soules: but I will neuer beleeue it while I liue; For if such men be not saued, I cannot tell who shall.

Theol. But you must learn to know out of the Scriptures, that all outward honesty and righteousnesse, without the true knowledge & inward feeling of God, auaileth not to eternal life: As our Saiuour Christ saith, Except your righteousnes exceed the righteousnes of the Scribes & Pharisees, ye cannot enter into the kingdome of heauen. It is also written, that when Paul preached at Berea, many honest men & honest women did beléeue: that is, such as were outwardly honest, or honest to the world only: for they could not be truly & inwardly honest, before they did beléeue. Therefore you see, that this outward honesty & ciuility, without the inward regeneration of the spirit, auaileth not to eternall life: and then

Matth. 5.

Act. 17. 12.

conse-

consequently, all your honest worldly men are in great danger of losing their soules for euer.

Asun. What sound reason can you yeeld, why such honest men should be condemned?

Theol. Because many such are vtterly void of all true knowledge of God, & of his Word. Nay, which is more, many of them despise the word of God, & hate all the zealous professors of it. They esteem Preachers but as prattlers, and Sermons as good tales: they esteeme a Preacher no more than a shoomaker: they regard the Scriptures no more than their old shoes. What hope is there then, I pray you, that such men should be saued? Doth not the holy Ghost say, How shall we escape, if we neglect so great saluation. Heb. 2. 3.

Asun. You goe too farre; you iudge too hardly of them.

Theo. Not a whit. For all experience sheweth, that they minde, dreame, and dote of nothing else day and night but this world, this world, lands & leases, grounds & liuings, kine & sheep, & how to were rich. All their thoughts, words, and workes, are of these and such like things. And their actions do most manifestly declare, that they are of the earth, and speake of the earth, and that there is nothing in them but earth earth. As for Sermons they care not how few they hear. And for ye Scriptures,

they regard them not, they reade them not, they esteem them not worth the while: there is nothing more irksome vnto them: they had rather pill Crawes, or doe any thing, than heare, reade, or conferre of the Scriptures. And as the Prophet saith: The Word of the Lord is as a reproach vnto them, they haue no delight in it.

Ier.6.10.

Phil. I maruell much, that such men should liue so honestly to the world-ward.

Theo. No maruell at all; for many bad men whose hearts are worm-eaten within, yet for some outward and carnall respects do abstaine from the grosse act of sin: as some for credit, some for shame, some for feare of law, some for feare of punishment: but none for loue of God, for zeale of conscience, of disobedience. For it is a sure thing, that the wicked may haue that spirit which doth represse, but not that which doth renew.

Phil. It seemeth then by your speeches, that some which are not regenerate, do in somethings excell the children of God.

Theol. Most certain it is, that some of them in outward gifts, and the outward carriage of themselues, do goe beyond some of the Elect.

Phil. Shew me, I pray you in what gifts.

Theol. In learning, discretion, iustice, temperance, prudence, patience, liberality, affability,

bility, kindnes, courtesie, good nature, &c.

Phil. Me thinks it should not be possible.

Theol. Yes truly. For some of Gods deare children, in whom no doubt the inward work is truly and soundly wrought, yet are so troubled and incombred with a crabbed & crooked nature, and so clogged with some masker-sin, as some with anger, some with pride, some with couetousnesse, some with lusts, some one way, & some another: all which breaking out in them, do so blemish them & their profession, that they cannot so shine forth vnto men, as otherwise no doubt they would; & this is their wound, their griefe, and their heart-smart, & that which costeth them many a teare & many a prayer: & yet can they not get the full victorie ouer them, but still they are left in them, as the pricke in the flesh to humble them.

Phil. Yet loue should couer a multitude of such infirmities in Gods children.

Theol. It should do so indeed: but there is great want of loue, euen in the best: and the worse sort espying these infirmities in ỳ godly, run vpon them with open mouth, and take vpon them to condemn them vtterly, and to iudge their hearts, saying: They be hypocrits, dissemblers, & there is none worse than they.

Phil. But do you not think, that there be some counterfeits, euen amongst the greatest professors?

Theol.

Theol. Yes, no doubt, there be, and allwayes have bin some very hypocrites in the Church: but we must take heed of iudging & condemning all for some. For it were very much to condemne Christ & his eleuen Disciples, because of one Iudas; or the whole Primitiue Church, for one Ananias and Sapphira.

Phil. But I hope you are of this mind, that some regenerate men, euen in outward gifts, and their outward carriage, are comparable with any others.

Theol. Questionlesse, very many. For they being guided by Gods spirit, and vpheld by his grace, do walke very vprightly and vnblameably towards men.

Phil. Yet there resteth one scruple: for it seemeth very strange vnto me, that men of so discreet carriage as you speak of, & of so many good parts, should not be saued. It is great pitie such men should be damned.

Theol. It seemeth so vnto vs indeed: but God is only wise. And you must note, that as there be some infirmities in Gods Children, which he correcteth with temporall chastisements; and yet rewardeth their faith, loue, & inward seruice and obedience, with eternall life: so there be some good things in the wicked and them that are without Christ, which God rewardeth with temporall blessings; and

yet

yet punisheth them eternally for their vnbelieſe and hardneſſe of heart.

Phil. Now you haue reaſonably well ſatiſfied me touching the doctrine of regeneration, and the manifold errors and deceits that are in it, and of it. I pray you let vs now proceed: and firſt of all tell mee, by what meanes the new birth is wrought.

Theol. By the preaching of the word, as the outward meanes: and the ſecret work of the ſpirit, as the inward meanes. 1. Pet. 1. 23 Iohn 15. 3. Act. 10. 44. Eph. 4. 3.

Phil. Many heare the word preached, and are nothing the better, but rather the worſe: what, I pray you, is the cauſe of that?

Theol. Their own incredulity, and hardneſſe of heart: becauſe God in his wrath leaueth them to themſelues, and deprriueth them of his Spirit, without the which all preaching is in vaine. For except the Spirit do follow the Word into our hearts, we can finde no ioy, taſte, nor comfort therein. Act. 16. 14.

Phil. Cannot a man attaine vnto regeneration and the new birth, without the Word and the Spirit?

Theol. No verily. For they are the inſtruments & meanes, whereby God doth work it.

Aſsu. Why may not a man haue as good a faith to God-ward, that heareth no Sermons, as hee that heareth all the Sermons in the world?

Theol. Why may not he which eateth no meat, be as fat and as well-liking, as he that eateth all the meat in the world? For is not ye preaching of the Word the food of our soules?

Antil. I like not so much hearing of Sermons, and reading of the Scriptures, except men could keepe them better.

Theol. Faithfull & honest hearers do therefore heare, that they may be more able to obserue and do. For a man cannot do the will of God before he know it: and he cannot know it without hearing and reading.

Antil. I maruell what good men do get by gadding to Sermons, & poring so much in the Scripture; or what are they better than other? There are none more ful of enuie and malice than they: They will do their neighbour a shrewd turn as soon as any body; and therefore, in mine opinion, they be but a company of hypocrites, and precise fooles.

Theol. You iudge vncharitably. Full little doe you know what they feele, or what good Gods people get by hearing of the word. For the work of the spirit in the hearts of the Elect is very secret, & altogether hid from the
John 3. 8. world, as it is written: The winde bloweth where it listeth, and thou heareſt the sound therof, but canst not tell whither it goeth, or whence it commeth; so is euery man that is

borne

borne of the ſpirit. And again: The things of God knoweth no man, but the ſpirit of God.

Antil. Tuſh, tuſh: what needs all this ado? If a man ſay his Lords Praier, his ten Commandements, and his Beleefe, and keepe them, and ſay no body no harme, nor do no body no harme, and do as he would be done to, haue a good faith to God-ward, and bee a man of Gods beleefe, no doubt he ſhall be ſaued without all this running to Sermons, and prattling of the Scripture.

Theol. Now you powre it out indeed: you think you haue ſpoken wiſely. But alas you haue bewrayed your great ignorance. For you imagine a man may bee ſaued without the Word: which is a groſſe error.

Antil. It is no matter: ſay you what you will, and all the Preachers in the world beſides; as long as I ſerue God, & ſay my prayers duly and truly, morning and euening, & haue a good faith in God, and put my whole truſt in him, and do my true intent, and haue a good mind to God-ward, and a good meaning; although I am not learned, yet I hope it will ſerue the turne for my ſoules health. For, That God which made mee, muſt ſaue mee. It is not you that can ſaue mee, for all your learning, and all your Scriptures.

Theol. You may very fitly be compared to a

ſicke

sicke man, who hauing his braine distempered with heate, raueth, & speaketh idlely, he cannot tell what. For the holy Ghost saith; He that
Pro. 28. 5. turneth away his eare from hearing the law, euen his praier shalbe abominable. And again:
Pro. 13. 13. He that despiseth the Word he shall be destroied. So long therfore as you despise Gods Word, & turne away your eare from hearing his Gospel preached, all your praiers, your fantasticall seruing of God, your good meanings, and your good intents, are to no purpose; but most loathsome & odious in the sight of God:
Esa. 1. 14. as it is written: My soule hateth your new Moons, and your appointed feasts, they are a burthen vnto me, I am weary to beare them: When you stretch out your hands, I wil hide mine eies from you: and though you make many praiers, I wil not heare. For your hands are full of bloud. And again, the Lord saith by
Esa. 66. 3. the same Prophet: He that killeth a bullock, is as if he slew a man: he that sacrificeth a sheep, as if he cut off a dogs neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offred swines bloud: he that remembreth incense, as if he blessed an idoll. Where you se the Lord telleth you his mind touching these matters: to wit, that all your prayers, seruices, good meanings, &c. are abominable vnto him, so long as you walk in ignorance, profaneness, disobedience, & contempt

tempt of the Gospell. For he saith in ye words immediately going before: To him will I looke, euen to him that is poore, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my words.

Asun. I grant indeed, for them that are idle and haue little to do, it is not amisse now & then to heare a Sermon, & reade the Scriptures: but we haue no leisure, we must follow our businesse, wee cannot liue by the Scriptures; they are not for plain folk, they are too high for vs, we will not meddle with them. They belong to Preachers and Ministers.

Theo. Christ saith: My sheep hear my voice, & I giue vnto them eternall life. If therfore you refuse to hear the voice of Christ, you are none of his sheep, neither can you haue eternall life. And in another place our Lord Iesus saith: He that is of God, heareth Gods word, Ye therfore hear it not, because ye are not of God. S. Paul writing to all sorts of men, both rich & poore, high & low, men & women, yong & old, exhorteth, that the word of Christ may dwel plenteously in them all, in all wisdom. You see therfore that the Apostle would haue all sorts of people that haue soules to saue, to be well acquainted with the scriptures. Therfore you may as wel say you will not meddle with God, with Christ, nor with euerlasting life, as to say, you will not meddle with the Scriptures.

Iohn 10.

Ioh. 8. 47.

Col. 3. 16.

Asun.

Asun. Well, I cannot reade, and therfore I cannot tell what Christ, or what S. Paul may say: but this I am sure of, that God is a good man (worshipped might he be,) he is mercifull, and that wee must bee saued by our good prayers and good seruing of God.

Theol. You speak foolishly & ignorantly in all that you say, hauing no ground for any thing you speak, but your own fancy, and your own conceit: & yet you wil beléeue your own fancy against all Preachers, and against all that can be spoken out of the Word. But I pray you giue me leaue a little: If a man dream that he shall be a King, & in the morning when he is awake, perswadeth himself it shall be so, may hée not bée iustly laughed at, as hauing no ground for it? Euen so may all they, which beléeue their owne dreames and fantasies touching saluation. But it is true which Salomon
Pro. 14. 15 saith: A foole beleeueth euery thing; That copper is gold, & a counter an angell. And assuredly great reason there is, that hée which will not beléeue God, should be giuen ouer to beléeue the diuell, his dreame, and his fancy.

Asun. I pray you instruct me better then.

Theol. You had néed indéed to be better instructed: for the diuell hath sily deluded your soule, and cast a mist before your eies, making you beléeue the Crowe is white, & that your estate

estate is good before God, whereas indeed it is most woefull and miserable.

Asun. Nay I defie the diuell with all my heart. But I pray you tell me how it commeth to passe that I am thus deceiued.

Theol. This it is that deceiueth you, & many others: that you measure your selues by your selues & by others; which is a false metwand. For you seeme to lie straight, so long as you are measured by your selues, and by others: but lay the rule of Gods Word vnto you, and then you lie altogether crooked.

Asun. What other thing is there that deceiueth me?

Theo. Another thing ý deceiueth you, is your own heart; for you know not your own heart, but are altogether deceiued therein. For, the heart is deceiueable aboue all things. He is a wise man, & greatly enlightned, that knoweth his own heart. But you are blinde, and know not what is within you; but dimly imagine you shall be saued, & hope you know not what, of eternall life. And because blindnes maketh you bold, you will seeme to bee resolute in words, and say: It is pity he should liue, which doth any whit doubt of his saluation. And assuredly you speak as you think, & as you know. For, for ought that you know to the contrary, it seemeth so: though indeed, & in truth it is not so:

Ier. 17.9.

for: for you are deluded with a false light. And sometimes no doubt you haue pricks, gripes, terrors, & inward accusations of conscience, for all your bold and resolute speeches.

Asun. Truly I neuer heard so much before.

Theol. That is because you shut your eyes, and stop your eares against God and all goodnesse. You are like the deafe Adder, which heareth not the voice of the Charmer, though he be most expert in charming.

Psa. 58.45.

Asun. Well then; if it be so, I would be glad now to learn, if you would teach me. And as you haue shewed me the means wherby the new birth is wrought: so now shew me the certaine signes & tokens thereof: whereby all men may certainly know that they are sanctified, regenerate, and shall be saued.

Eight infallible signes of saluation.

Theol. There be eight infallible notes and tokens of a regenerate mind, which may well be termed the eight signes of saluation; and they are these:

Ioh. 3.3.
Ioh. 2.5.
Psal. 119. 114.
Psal. 145. 18.
Rom. 12. 11.
Apo. 3.19.
Mat. 16.24
Iob 1.28.
Eph. 4.21.
Phil 4.8.

A loue to the children of God.
A delight in his Word.
Often and feruent prayer.
Zeale of Gods glory.
Denialt of our selues.
Patient bearing of the Crosse, with profit and comfort.
Faithfulnesse in our calling.

Honest

Honest, iust, and conscionable dealing in all our actions amongst men.

Phil. Now that you haue shewed vs the euident signes of mans saluation, shew vs also the signes of condemnation.

Theo. The contraries vnto these are manifest signes of damnation.

No loue to the children of God.
No delight in his Word.
Seldome and cold prayers.
Coldnesse in Gods matters.
Trusting to our selues.
Impatience vnder the Crosse.
Vnfaithfulnesse in our calling.
Vnhonest and vnconscionable dealing.

Eight signes of condemnation.

Phil. No doubt if a man be infected with these, they be shrewd signes that a man is extremely soule-sicke, and in a very dangerous case. But are there none yet more euident and apparant signes of condemnation than these?

Theol. Yes verily. There be nine very clere and manifest signs of a mans condemnation.

Phil. I pray you let me hear what they be.

Theol. Pride.
Whoredome.
Couetousnesse.
Contempt of the Gospell.
Swearing.
Lying.

Nine manifest signes of damnation.

Drunken-

Drunkennesse.
Idlenesse.
Oppression.

Phil. These be grosse things indeed.

Theol. They may not vnfitly be termed the nine Beelzebubs of the world: & he that hath these signs vpon him, is in a most woful case.

Phil. What if a man be infected with some two or three of these?

Theol. Whosoeuer is infected with three of them, is in great danger of losing his soule: For all these be deadly venime, and ranke poyson to the soule: and either the three first, or the three last, or the middle three, are enough to poyson the soule, and sting it to death. Nay, to say the truth, a man were as good gripe a toad, and handle a snake, as meddle with any one of these.

Phil. Is euery one of them so dangerous?

Theol. Questionlesse. For they be the very plague-sores of the soule. If any man haue a plague-sore vpon his body, we vse to say, Gods tokens are vpon him, Lord haue mercy on him: So we may truly say, If any man be throughly and totally infected at the heart with any one of these, Gods tokens are vpon his soule, Lord haue mercy vpon him.

Phil. Many do not think these to be such dangerous matters as you make them, and

many

many there be which make light of them.

Theol. True indeed: for the most part of men are altogether shut vp in blindnesse and hardnesse of heart, hauing neither sight nor feeling of their sinnes, and therefore make light of them, thinking there is no such danger.

Phil. It is most certaine, that men are giuen to lessen and extenuate their sinnes: or else to hide them, & daube them ouer with many cunning shifts & vaine excuses. For men are euer ready to take couert, & will writhe & wreath (like snakes) to hide their sins: yea, if it were possible, to make sinne no sin, to make vertue vice, and vice vertue. Therfore I pray you lay open vnto me out of the Scriptures, the grieuousnesse and vglinesse of their sins.

Theol. The stinking filthinesse of these sinnes is so great and horrible, that no tongue or pen of man is sufficient fully to manifest and lay open the same, according to the proper nature & being thereof: yet notwithstanding, I will doe my endeauour to lay them open in some measure, that all men may the more loath them

Phil. I pray you then first of all begin with pride.

Theol. You say well: For that indeede may well stand in the fore-front, sith it is a mastert-dinell and the master-pocke of the soule.

Phil. Shew me out of the Scriptures, that

pride is so grieuous and loathsome.

Prou. 16. 5. *Thol.* Salomon saith: Euery one that is proud in heart, is abomination to the Lord. Which plainely sheweth, that God doth detest and abhorre proud men. And is it not a fearfull thing thinke you, to be abhorred of God? And in the same Chap. verse 18. he saith: Pride goeth before destruction, and an high minde before the fall. Wherein he sheweth that pride is the forerunner of some deadly downfall, either by disgracing or displacing. For it is an old and true Prouerbe, Pride will haue a fall. And oftentimes when men are most lifted vp, then are they nearest vnto it: as the examples of Haman, Nebuchadnezzar, and Herod doe plainely declare. When the Nilt swelleth, the rest of the body pineth away: Euen so when the heart is puft vp with pride, the whole man is in danger of destruction. Moreouer, the holy Ghost saith, The Lord will destroy the house of the proud.

Prou. 15. 24. Iob saith of such kinde of men, The sparke of

Iob 11. 5 &15. his fire shall not shine: feare shall dwell in

Iob 28. 26. his house, and brimstone shall be scattered vp-on his habitation. And in another place he saith,

Iob 23. 13. The fire which is not blown shall deuour him. We thinke therefore if there were any sparke of grace in vs, these terrible speeches of ye holy Ghost might serue to humble vs, and pull down our pride: especially sith the Scriptures do af-

firme

strong that God resisteth the proud, and setteth himselfe *ex professo* against them: wherefore woe unto them; for if God take against a man, who can reclaim him? for he doth whatsoever he will.

Phil. But tell me I pray you when you speak against pride, what pride is it that you meane?

Theol. I meane all pride, both that which is inward in the heart, & that also which breaketh out in mens foreheads: I mean that which apparently shewes it self in mens words & works.

Phil. Do you meane also pride of mens gifts?

Theol. Yes surely: for there is no pride worse or more dangerous than that. Beware, saith one, of spiritual pride: as to be proud of our learning, wit, knowledge, reading, writings, sermons, praiers, godlines, policy, valor, strength, riches, honour, birth, beauty, authority. For God hath not given such gifts unto men, to the end they should make sale-ware of them, and set them a sunshining to behold; seeking only themselves with their gifts, the vaine praise of the multitude, and applause of the people: so robbing God of his honour, and proudly arrogating to themselves that which is due unto God; which is the praise of his gifts: but he hath given his gifts to another end, namely, that wee should use them to his glory, and the good of others (either in Church or Common-wealth) especially of those which doe most concerne us.

Phil. Yet we see commonly, men of greatest gifts are most proud.

Theol. True indeed: For the finest cloth is soonest stained. And as wormes ingender sooner in soft and tender wood, than in that which is more hard and knotty; and as moths doe breed sooner in fine wooll, than in course flocks: Euen so pride and vaine glory, doe sooner assault an excellent & rare man in all kind of knowledge and vertue, than another of meaner gifts. And therefore pride is said to spring out of the ashes of all vertues. For men will be proud, because they are wise, learned, godly, patient, humble, &c. Pride therefore may very fitly be compared to the crab-stock spines, which grow out of the roote of the very best apple tree. Therefore to say the truth, this is one of the last engines and weapons, which the diuell vseth for the ouerthrowing of Gods owne children, euen to blow them vp with pride, as it were with gun-powder. For as we see it come to passe in the siege of strong holds, when no battery or force of shot will preuaile, the last remedy and policy is to vnderminе it, and blow it vp with traines of gun-powder: so when Satan can no way preuaile against some excellent seruants of God, his last deuice is to blow them vp with pride, as it were with gun-powder.

Phil. I see it is a speciall grace of God,

for

for men of great gifts to be humble minded: & he is an odd man of a thousand, wch excelling in gifts, excelleth in humility; & the more gifts he hath, the more humbly he walks: not contemning others, but esteeming the better than himselfe. For commonly we are the worse for Gods gifts, because we haue not the right vse of them; and againe, because they ingender so much proud flesh in vs that we had need daily to be corzied. Therfore God sheweth great fauor & mercy to that man, whom he humbleth & taketh downe by any afflictions or infirmities whatsoeuer. For otherwise, it is sure proud flesh would altogether ouergrow vs.

Theol. You haue spoken the truth: for the Apostle himselfe confesseth, that he was tempted and troubled this way, and had like to haue bin puffed vp out of measure, with the abundance of his reuelations, but that God in great mercy, sent him a cooler, and a rebater; to wit, a prick in the flesh (which he calleth the messenger of Satan) whereby the Lord cured him of his pride. And euen so doth he cure many of vs of our pride, by throwing vs to Satan, leauing vs to our selues, and giuing vs ouer to commit some grosse euill, euen to fall downe and breake our neckes: and all, to the end he may humble vs, tame vs, and pull downe our pride, which he seeth we are heart-sicke of. It is good for vs 2. Cor. 12.

therefore to be humble in the abundance of grace, that we be not proud of that which we haue, or that which we haue done. For humility in sin, is better than pride in well-doing,

Phil. Herein surely appeareth the great wisdome and mercy of God: that he so graciously bringeth good out of euill, and turneth our afflictions, infirmities, fals and down-fals, to his glory, and our good.

Theol. It is most true. For euen as of the flesh of a Viper, is made a soueraigne medicine, to cure those which are stunge of a Viper; and as Physicians expell poison with poison: so God, according to his marueilous wisedome, doth of the infirmities which remaine in vs after regeneration, cure other more dangerous diseases; as pride, vaine-glory, and presumption. Oh, blessed therefore bee his name for euer, which thus mercifully causeth all things to work together for the good of his owne people; of whom these things are specially to be vnderstood.

Phil. Is there no cause, why men of great gifts should glory in their gifts?

Theol. No surely, none at all. For the Apostle
1.Cor.4. saith, Who seperateth thee? And what hast thou, that thou hast not receiued? If thou hast receiued it, why boastest thou, as though thou hadst not receiued it? Where the Apostle plainely sheweth, that no man is to bee proud

of

of his gifts; because they are none of his own: he hath but receiued them to vse. We count him worthie to bee laughed at as a fole, who hauing borrowed braue apparell of others (as a silke gowne, a satten doublet, a chaine of gold, veluet breches, &c.) should proudly iet in the streets in them, as if they were his owne: euen so they are worthy to be chronicled for foles, which are proud of god gifts, which are none of their owne. Therefore the Prophet Ieremy saith: Thus saith the Lord; Let not the wise man glory in his wisdome, nor the strong man in his strength, neither the rich man in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he vnderstandeth & knoweth me. To this point also well saith the heathen Poet: No man can escape the punishment of pride; therefore in greatest prosperity be not puffed vp.

Ier. 9. 23.

Theocritus.

Phil. Yet it is a world to see, how proud, surly, haughty, stately, insolent & Thrasonicall some bee, because of their gifts: they thinke they touch the clouds with their heads, and that the earth doth not bear them: they take themselues to be petty Angels, or some wonderfull wights. They contemne and disdaine all others which haue not the like gifts. They do contemptuously ouerlooke them, as a lion should ouerlooke a mouse, a king a begger; or, as wee say in a prouerbe, As the diuell ouer-looked Lincolne.

Theol. Oh proud dust! Oh haughty worms meat! If they would bring their hearts before God, and their consciences, thoughts, and affections to be iudged by this Law, it would sone cole them, and take them downe well enough; they should see their wants, and imperfections to be so great, that they indeed should haue no more cause to boast of their gifts, than the Black-more hath of his whitenes, because his teeth are white. The holy Ghost cuts al our combes, and plucketh downe all pride of flesh,

Iob 26. 14 when hee saith, How small a thing doth man vnderstand of God!

Phila. I pray you, let vs proceede to speake of the outward and grosse pride of the World: and first of all, tell me what you thinke of pride in apparell.

Theol. I thinke it to be a vanity of all vanities, and a folly of all follies. For to be proud of of apparell, is, as if a theefe should be proud of his halter, a begger of his clouts, a childe of his gay, or a fole of his bable.

Phila. Yet we see how proud many (especially women) be of such bables. For when they haue spent a good part of the day in tricking and trimming, pricking and pinning, pranking and pouncing, girding and lacing, and brauing vp themselues in most exquisite manner, then out they come into the streets,

with

with their Pedlers ſhop vpon their backe, and cary their creſts very high, taking themſelues to bee little Angels: or at leaſt ſomwhat more than other women. Whereupon they doe ſo exceedingly ſwell with pride, that it is to be feared they will burſt with it, as they walke in the ſtreetes. And truly we may thinke, the very ſtones in the ſtreet, and the beams in the houſes doe quake, and wonder at their monſtrous, intollerable and exceſſiue pride: For it ſeemeth, that they are altogether a lumpe of pride, a maſſe of pride, euen altogether made of pride, and nothing elſe but pride, pride.

Theo. **You ſeeme to be very hot in the matter.**

Aſune. Mary, Sir, I like him the better: for the world was neuer ſo full of pride as it is now adaies.

Theol. **Alas, alas: indeed, who can hold his peace at the pride of this age! What a thing is it, that flesh and blood, wormes meat, duſt and aſhes, durt and dung, ſhould ſo braue it out with their trim clouts, and that in the ſight of God, angels, and men? For the time wil come, when both they, and all their gay clouts ſhal be buried in a graue: yea as Iob ſaith,** The graue ſhall bee their houſe, and they ſhall make their bed in the darke. And then ſhall they ſay to corruption, Thou art my Father: and to the worme, Thou art my Mother and my Siſter. Iob.17.14

What

What then shall it auaile them, thus to haue ruffled it out in all their brauery, when as suddenly, they shall goe downe to destruction? What did it profit the rich man, to be sumptuously cloathed, and fare deliciously euery day, when his body was buried in the dust, and his soule in hell fire?

Asune. I pray you, Sir, what say you to these great ruffes, which are borne vp with supporters and rebatoes, as it were with post and raile?

Theol. What should I say? but God be mercifull vnto vs. For such things do draw downe the wrath & vengeance of God vpon vs all: & as the Apostle saith, for such things sake the wrath of God cõmeth vpon the children of disobedience. And truly, truly, we may well feare that God will plague vs for our abhominable pride.

Col. 3. 6.

Asune. What say you then to these doubled and redoubled ruffes, which are now in common vse, strouting fardingales, long locks, fore-tufts, shag haire, and all these new fashions which are deuised and taken vp euery day?

Theol. I say they are farre from that plainnesse, simplicity and modesty, which hath bene in former ages, our forefathers knew no such things. It is recorded of William Rufus, sometime King of this Land, that when his Chamberlaine on a time brought him a new paire of hose, he demanded of him what they cost: who answe-

Graftons Chron.

answered, three shillings. Whereat the King, being somewhat moued, commanded him to prepare him a paire of a marke. If Kings were then thought to exceed, that bestowed a marke vpon a paire of hose, what is it to be thought of many meane men these our dayes (yea such as haue no liuing, and are scarce of any good calling) which bestow as much vpon a paire, as the King did vpon two, when he was thought most of all to exceed? But alas, alas, we haue passed all bounds of modesty and measure: there is no hoe with vs. Our land is too heauy of this sinne. For the pride of all nations, and the follies of all Countries are vpon vs; how shall we beare them? And as for these new fashions, the more new they be, the more foolish, and as foolish are they. For with our new fashions, we are growne clean out of fashion. If we had as many fashions of our bodies, as we haue of our attire, we should haue as many fashions as fingers and toes. But vaine men and women, doe apparently shew their vaine mindes, by following so greedily such vaine toyes and fashions.

Assune. It was neuer a good world since starching and steeling, buskes and whale-bones, supporters & rebatoes, full moones and hobby-horses, painting and dying, with selling of fauour and complexion, came to be in vse. For

since

since these came in, couetousnesse, oppression, and deceit haue increased. For how else should pride be maintain'd? & sure it is, within these thirty years, these things were not known, nor heard of. And what say you then to painting of faces, laying open of naked breasts, dying of haire, wearing of peri-wigs, & other haire-coronets and top-gallants? And what say you to our artificiall women, which will be better than God hath made them? They like not his handie worke, they will mend it, and haue other complection, other faces, other haire, other bones, other breasts, & other bellies, than God made them.

Phil. This I say, that you and I, and all the Lords people, haue great and iust cause of mourning, weeping, and lamentation, because such abominations is committed in Israel. Da-
Psal. 119. uids eyes gushed out with riuers of teares, because men keepe not Gods lawes, and an horrible feare came vpon him, because men forsoke the law of God. Ieremy did sigh in secret, wish-
Ier. 9. 1. ing that his head were full of water, & his eyes a fountaine of teares, because of the sins of the people. Nehemiah mourned for the transgressi-
Neh. 13. on of Gods people. Lots iust soule was vexed with the vnclean conversation of the Sodomits: & shal we mourn nothing at all for these things? shall we bee vnpit grieued for the pride of our

land?

land? shall we shed no tears for such horrible and intolerable abominations? They are odious in the sight of God and men: the ayre stinketh of them. It is Gods marueilous patience that the diuell doth not carry them away quicke, and rid the earth of them: or that fire & brimstone doth not come down from heauen & consume them.

Antil. You are too hot in these matters of attire: you make more of them thã there is cause

Asun. I con him thanke: Gods blessing on his heart; I shall loue him the better while I know him, because hee is so earnest against such shamefull & detestable pride. Is it not a shame that women, professing true religion, should make themselues such pictures, puppets, and peacocks as they doe? And yet I heare few Preachers in the pulpit speake against it.

Antil. I maruell you should be so earnest in matters of apparel. You know welenough that apparell is an indifferent thing: and that religion and the kingdome of God doth not consist in these things.

Theol. I know right well that apparell in it owne nature is a thing indifferent: but lewd, wanton, immodest, & offensiue apparell is not indifferent. For all such abuse taketh away the indifferency of them, and maketh them sinfull and euill, by circumstance. For otherwise, why should the Lord threaten by his Prophet,

that

that he would visit the Princes, and the Kings children, and all such as were cloathed with strange apparell, that is the fashions of other countries, Zeph.cap.1.8. Againe, why should the Lord so plague the proud dames, and minsing minions of Ierusalem, for their pride and vanity in attire, if there were no euill in such kinde of abuse? The Lord saith thus in the 3. of Esay, against those braue and gallant dames, Because the daughters of Zion are hautie, and walke with stretched out necks, & with wandring eyes, walking and minsing as they go, & make a tinkling with their feet: therfore shall the Lord make the heads of the daughters of Zion bald, and the Lord shall discouer their secret parts. In that day shall the Lord take away the ornament of the slippers & the cals, & the round tires, the sweet bals, & the bracelets, and the bonnets, the tires of the head and the slops, the head-bands and the tablets, the earings, the rings, & the mufflers, the costly apparell, and the veiles and the wimples, and the crisping pinnes, and the glasses, & the fine linnen, and the hoods, and the lawnes. And in stead of sweet sauour there shall be stinke: and in stead of a girdle, a rent: and in stead of dressing of the haire baldnesse: and in stead of of stomacher, a girding of sancke-cloth; and burning in stead of beauty. Then shal her gates

mourne

mourne and lament: and ſhe being deſolate ſhall ſit vpon the ground.

Thus we ſée how terribly the Lord threateneth the gallant dames of Ieruſalem, for their exceſſiue and abominable pride. And this may well be a mirrour for the proud mutions of our age: which aſſuredly may well feare, the Lord will bring ſome ſuch iudgement vpon them, as he did vpon the daughters of Ieruſalem. For their ſinne is as great in this kinde, as was the daughters of Sion, and God is the ſame God now that he was then to punith it.

Antil. Tuſh, neuer ſpeake ſo much of theſe matters of apparrell. For we muſt do as others do; and follow the faſhion: or els we ſhall not be eſteemed.

Theol. If you follow them not, you ſhall bée more eſtéemed of God, of his Angels, Saints, and all good men. As for all others, if you eſtéeme them more than theſe, you ſhew what you are.

Antil. Well, for all that, ſay you what you will, pride is in the heart, and not in the apparell: For one may be proud of plaine apparell, aſwell as of coſtly. And ſome are as proud of their falling bands and little ſets, as others are of their great ruffes.

Theol. You ſpeake foliſhly. For how know you that? can you iudge mens hearts & inwards

affections? Can you say, when mens and women's apparell is sober, modest and Christian-like, that they haue proud hearts, and are proud of that attire? You goe very farre indeede, to iudge the heart. You ought to iudge charitably of such as go soberly and modestly attired, euen that their heart is according to their attire. As for you, we may rather thinke your heart is haine, light, and foolish, because your attire doth strongly argue it: And as the Prophet saith: The triall of your countenance testifieth against you: you declare your sinnes as Sodom, and hide them not.

Esa.3.9.

Phil. I pray you then set downe some rules for apparell out of the Scriptures.

Theol. I may well set downe what I will: but surely most men and women will do what they list. For verily it may be thought, that many of this age haue forsworne God and his word, & all goodnes. For they are come to this point, let God say what he will, they will doe what they list. For as the Prophet saith: They haue made a couenant with hell, & with death, and are grown to an agreement, *Esa.*28.15. And I doe verily thinke, if God himselfe should come downe from heauen in his owne person, and dissuade men and women from this vanity of apparell, yet would they still vse it, as it were in despite of God, and as it were to anger him

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the more. For they are so extraordinarily enamoured, and so immoderately delighted with it, and doe so continually, and altogether dote on it, and are so wood-mad of it; that they will haue it, though Men and Angels, and all the world say nay: nay, which is more, though they should goe to the diuell quicke with it. And therefore it is but lost labour to speake against it, preach against it, or write against it. It is but euen to plough the sea, or knocke at a deafe mans dore; for there is no hope of any reformation. Onely this we gaine, that the world is reproued and conuicted of sinne. And these things shall stand in record against them, in the last day: so that they may say they had a faire warning, and that there was a Prophet among them.

Phil. Yet for all this, I pray you set vs down some directions and rules, out of Gods holy Booke, concerning attire. For albeit some be very bad and outrageous in these things, yet there be some others which are well disposed, and will (no doubt) make some conscience to frame themselues according to the rules of Gods Word.

Phil. Well then, for their sakes which are well disposed, I will set downe some fewe directions. Saint Paul in 1. Tim. 2. 9. willeth, that women should array themselues in comely apparell, with shamefastnesse and modesty, as be-

commeth women that professe the feare of God: and not with broidered haire, or gold, or pearls, or costly apparell. The Apostle S. Peter
1.Pet.3.3. giueth like rules also: for he saith, speaking of Christian matrons, and professors of holy religion, That their apparell must not be outward, that is, not consist so much in outward brauery, (as broidred haire, gold put about, &c.) as it must be inward, that the hid man of the heart may be clothed with a meeke and quiet spirit; which is a thing before God, much set by. For after this maner, saith he, in times past, the holy women, which trusted in God, did attire themselues: as Sara, Rebecca, Rachel, and such like ancient and graue matrons.

Phil. Wherein doth this inward cloathing specially consist?

Theol. In foure things, which are set downe in the forenamed places: to wit, chaste fastnesse, modesty, a quiet spirit, and a meeke spirit.

Phil. These be fine sutes of apparell indeed: I would all women would put them on, & neuer put them off, but weare them continually: for they are the better for wearing, though all other apparell be the worse.

Theol. If women would decke themselues inwardly with these aforesaid vertues, they
Pro.30.1. would be vnto them as ornaments of gold, and iewels of pearls. For the woman that feareth

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the Lord shall be praised.

Phil. But now, I pray you, Sir, set downe your iudgement for outward attire.

Theol. This is all that I can say, touching that point, That it must be, as the Apostle saith, comely, decent, handsome, neat, and seemely: not light, not wanton, not lasciuious, not immodest, not offensiue.

Phil. But who shall iudge what is comely, sober, handsome, modest, &c? For euery man and woman will say, their apparell is but decent and cleanly, how gallant, braue, and flanting so euer they be.

Theol. Herein the examples of the most godly, wise, graue, and modest men and women are to bee followed: for who can better iudge what is comely, sober and modest, than they?

Phil. But wee see some, euen of the better sort, in this matter are a little infected, run out, and goe beyond their bounds.

Theol. The more is the pitty. But alas, we see the sway of the time and rage of the streame is so violent, that it carrieth before it whatsoeuer is not settled, and very deepe rooted. And some godly and well disposed persons, whose hearts are not with these things, but with God, are, notwithstanding, perforce carried away with the violence of the wind & tide; whose case though it cannot well bee defended or excused,

yet it is much to be pitied and lamented.

Phil. Haue you any further directions, touching this point?

Theol. There is one thing yet more to be added: to wit, that attire bee according to mens places, calling, and degrees. For that is not seemly for one, that is seemly for another: that becomes not one mans place, that becommeth anothers. For, that is not meete for poore men which is meete for rich men: nor that meete for meane men, which is meete for men of note and great place.

Phil. Then you thinke it is lawfull for Kings, Princes, and great Parsonages, to weare pearle, gold, siluer and veluet, &c.

Theol. Questionlesse, it is lawfull for such, in sober manner and measure, to weare the most costly and precious things which the earth can afford: and that, to set out the magnificence, pomp, and glory of their places. And therfore, such things are in them most comely and decent.

Phil. But now adayes, few will keep within compasse, few will know their places: but the most part run beyond their bounds, and leape quite out of their sockets.

Theol. True indeed. For now adayes meane gentlewomen, yea some gentlewomen of their owne making, will ruffle it, and braue it out in their attire, like Countesses and Ladies of

honor

honour. Plaine folke also in the countrey will flaunt it like Courtiers, and like good Gentlemen and gentlewomen: and they seeme to say in their hearts, Fie of this plainenesse, wee will no more of it: we will not take it as wee haue done. So that now the old prouerb is verified: Euery lack will be a Gentleman, and Ione is as good as my Lady. For now we cannot, by their apparell, discerne the Maid from the Mistresse, nor the Waiting-gentlewoman from her lady. And thus wee see in this matter of apparell how all is out of ioynt.

Phil. Is there any more to bee said in this case?

Theol. There is yet another thing to be respected in this matter of attire,

Phil. What is that?

Theol. That it bee according to mens abilities. For it is lamentable to consider, how poore men and women, poore hired seruants, milke-maids, and such like, goe quite beyond their ability. And more lamentable to see what wretched and ill fauoured shifts they make, to compasse these things: so sharpe and so eagerly are they set vpon them.

Phil. Well Sir, now you haue sufficiently rolled the stone and at large satisfied vs touching the matter of pride, which is the first signe of condemnation. Now proceed to the second,

which is whoredom; and vnfold vnto vs out of the Scriptures, the dangers thereof.

Pro.32.14 *Theol.* Salomon, in his Prouerbs, saith: That the mouth of a strange woman, or an harlot, is as a deepe pit: hee that is a detestation to the Lord, shall fall therein. Wherein he plainely sheweth, that those whom God detesteth, and is exceeding angry with, are giuen ouer to this vice. And in another place he saith: An whore Pro.13.17. is as a deepe ditch, and as a narrow pit. Noting thereby, that if a man be once fallen in with an harlot, he shall as hardly get out againe, as a man that is plunged into a very deepe and narrow pit, where he can scant stirre himselfe. The same Salomon, in the booke of Ecclesiastes yeelds vs the reason hereof: namely, because she is as nets, snares and bands, wherein if a man be once taken, he is fast enough for getting out. I finde, Eccl.7.28. saith he, more bitter than death, the woman whose heart is as nets and snares, and her hands as bands. He that is good before God, shall be deliuered from her: but the sinner shal be taken by her. We doe therefore plainly see, in what a labyrinth and dangerous case they be, that are left Pro.6.5. of God, and giuen ouer to whoredome and harlots: and therefore it is said, Desire not her beauty in thine heart, neither let her eye-lids catch thee: for by a whorish woman, a man is brought to a morsell of bread: and the adultresse hunteth

teth for life, which is precious. Againe he saith: Albeit the lips of an harlot drop as an hony-combe, & the roofe of her mouth is softer than oile: yet her later end is bitter as worm-wood, and as sharpe as a two-edged sword. All these prudent speeches of the holy Ghost, doe most euidently shew vnto vs, what a feareful thing it is to commit whoredome, and so to fall into the hands of whores and harlots. Therefore Iob saith of the wicked: Their soule dieth in youth, and their life among the whoremongers. Pro.5.3. Iob.36.1

Phil. You haue very well shewed out of Gods booke, the great danger of whoredome and adultery. And it is greatly to be lamented, that men in this age make so light of it as they doe, and that it is so common a vice: nay, that some (alas, with griefe I speake it) do professe it, liue by it, and prostitute themselues wholly vnto it.

Theol. Such men and women may iustly feare the plaguing hand of God: for the Lord saith by his Prophet: Though I fed them to the full, yet they committed adultery, and assembled themselues by companies in harlots houses. They rose vp in the morning like fed horses: for euery man neighed after his neighbours wife. Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not my soule be auenged on such a nation? Ier.5.8,9.

Phil. Me thinkes, if men were not altogether hardened in this sinne, and euen past feeling, and past grace, this threatning and thundering of God himselfe from heauen, should terrifie them.

Theol. A man would thinke so indeed: but now wee may take vp the old complaint of the
Ier.6.8 Prophet: I hearkened and heard, and loe, no man spake aright: no man repented him of his euill, saying, What haue I done? Euery one turneth to their race, as the horse rusheth into the battell.

Antil. Tush, whordome is but a tricke of youth; and wee see all men haue their imperfections.

Theol. You speake profanely and wickedly: For shall wee count that but a tricke of youth, for the which the Lord smote three and twenty
1.Cor.10. thousand of his owne people in one day? Shall wee count that but a trick of youth, for the which
1.Sam.12. the Lord threatned Dauid, his owne seruant,
10. that the sword should neuer depart from his house? Shall we count that but a trick of youth, for the which Hamor and Sechem, the father
Gen.34. and the sonne, and many other, both men, wo-
25. men and children, were cruelly murdred by Simeon and Leui, the sonnes of Iacob? Shall wee count that but a tricke of youth, for the which the Lord slew Hophni and Phineas, the two

sonnes

sonnes of Eli the Priest, in the battell of the Philistines? Shall wee thus set all at sire and seuen, and make light of such horrible villanies? Doth not the seuerity of the punishments shew the greatnesse of the sinne? Doth not the Apostle say: These things came vnto them for our examples, vpon whom the ends of the world are come? And yet you passe it ouer with a tushy, and a tricke of youth; as if God were to be dallied with. No, no, be not deceiued; God is not mocked. They which will not bee moued now in hearing, shall one day be crushed in peeces in feeling. And they which now call whoredome a tricke of youth, shall one day howle and cry, yell and yelp for such trickes, with woe and alas that euer they were borne.

1. Sam. 4. 11.

1. Cor. 10. 11.

Antil. Oh Sir, you must beare with youth, youth you know is fraile; and youth will bee youthfull, when you haue said all that you can.

Theol. Yea, but God doth allow no more liberty vnto youth, than vnto age: but bindeth all vpon paine of death, to the obedience of his commandements. The Apostle saith: Let young men bee sober minded. Dauid saith: Wherewith shall a young man clense his way? In taking heed therto according to thy word. The wise man saith: Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, And further addeth: that if they will needs follow their lusts,

Tit. 2. 6.

Psal. 119. 6.

Eccl. 12. 1.

their pleasures, and their owne swing: yet in the end hee will bring them to iudgement, arraigne them, condemne them, and tame them in hell fire well enough.

Phil. Yet we see, men are so violently carried after their lusts, and so desperately bent, that they will haue the present sweete and pleasure of sinne, come of it what will. Come sicknesse, come death, come hell, come damnation, they are at a point: they will pay the highest price for their lust. They will purchase their pleasures with the losse of their soules. O wofull purchase! O damnable pleasures!

Theol. Sweete meat will haue sowre sauce, and a dramme of pleasure a pound of sorrow. Such cursed caitifs shall at last pay a deare shot for their pleasures. Such desperate wretches shall one day know (to their euerlasting woe) what it is to prouoke God, and to sin with so high an hand against him. They shall well know, in spite of their hearts, that vengeance is prepared for the wicked, and that there is a God that iudgeth the earth. Let all men therefore take
Heb.13.4. heed in time; For whoremongers & adulterers
1.Cor.6.9. God will iudge. And the Apostle saith flatly, That whoremongers and adulterers shall not inherit the kingdome of God, Let therefore no
Heb.12. fornicator or vncleane person be found among
1.Pet.1.2. vs, as was *Esau*: but let vs abstaine from fleshly lusts,

lusts, which fight against the soule. And let euery one know how to possesse his vessell in holinesse and honour, and not in the lust of concupiscence, as the Gentiles which know not God, 1. Thes. 4. 5.

Herein let vs consider the wise speech of an ancient Father: Sinne, while it is in doing, ministreth some pleasure; but when it is committed, the short pleasure thereof vanisheth away, and long sorrow commeth in stead of it. Neither let vs here reiect the saying of a wise Heathen: Shunne pleasure, for feare of smart. Soure things follow sweet, and ioy heauinesse. Chrysost. in Matth. Isocrat ad Demon.

Antil. Yet for all this you shall not make me beleeue, that whoredome is so hainous a matter. You make more of it, than it is.

Theol. True indeed. For you, and such as you are, will beleeue nothing against your lusts and fleshly delights: and that is the cause why you are deafe on this eare. I will therefore adde a word or two more (out of the Oracles of God) to that which hath beene spoken. The wise King saith: He that committeth adultery with women, destroyeth his owne soule: and so is accessary to his owne death, which is no small matter. For wee vse to say, if a man hang himselfe, drowne himselfe, or any manner of way make away himselfe, that, he was cursed Pro. 6. 32

of

of God, that Gods hand was heauy against him, that he diuell ought him a shame, and now he hath paid it him. And all the countrie rings of such a strange accident, when, and where it falleth out: and the Crowner of the countrey doth sit vpon it. How much more may all the world wonder at this; that a man should destroy his owne soule, and wittingly and willingly cast away himselfe for euer? Now, the Holy Ghost saith: The adulterer doth such an act, giueth such a venture, and willingly murthereth himselfe. Oh, therefore woe vnto him that euer he was borne! for sure it is, that the great Crowner of heauen, that crownes whom hee will crowne, shall one day sit vpon it, and giue iudgement. Moreouer as the Adulterer sinneth against his soule, so also he sinneth against his body, after a speciall manner; as witnesseth the Apostle. Also he sinneth against his
1.Cor.6. 18. goods and outwards estate, as the holy man Iob
Iob 31.12. testifieth, saying; Adultery is a fire that deuoureth to destruction, and it will root out all our increase. Furthermore, he sinneth against his
Prou.6.33 name. For the Adulterer shall finde a wound, and dishonor: and his reproach shall neuer be put away.

Item, hee sinneth against his wife, who is
Mal. 2.14. 15. his companion, and the wife of his couenant. And God saith in the same place: Let none

trespasse

trespasse against the wife of his youth: keepe your selues in your spirit, and transgresse not. Last of all, he sinneth against his children and posterity: as the Lord said to Dauid; Because thou hast despised me, and done this, therefore the sword shall neuer depart from thy house. Behold, I will raise vp euill against thee, out of thine owne house. Now therefore, to conclude this point, wee may see how many deadly wounds men make themselues, by committing of adultery. They wound themselues in their soules. They wound themselues in their bodies. They wound themselues in their goods. They wound themselues in their names. They wound themselues in their wiues, and in their children. What man, except he were starke mad, would thrust in himselfe in so many places at once? The adulterer with his one sin of adultery, maketh all these deadly wounds in himselfe: and it is an hundred to one he will neuer get them cured, but will die, and bleed to death of them. Lo, thus you see the dangerous quality and condition of this sin. Shall we now therefore make light of it? Shall we say, it is but a tricke of youth? Shall we smooth ouer the matter with sweete words, when the holy Ghost maketh it so hainous and capitall? Shall we make nothing of that which draweth downe Gods wrath vpon the soule, body, goods, name, wife and children?

2. Sam. 12. 10.

That

That were an intolerable blindnesse, and most extreame hardnesse of heart. An ancient writer hath long agoe passed Sentence vpon vs, who make so light of this sin: for (saith he) Adultery is the very hooke of the diuell, whereby hee draweth vs to destruction. And another godly Father saith, that, Adultery is like a furnace, whose mouth is gluttony, the flame pride, the sparkles filthy words, the smoak an euill name, the ashes pouerty, & the end shame. And so we plainely see, that howsoeuer we regard not this sinne, but flatter our selues in it, yet those whose eyes the Lord hath opened, haue in all ages condemned it, as most flagitious and horrible: yea the very Heathen will rise vp in iudgement against vs, who haue spoken and written many things against this filthy and beastly vice.

Basil in Epist.

Gregor.

Phil. Now indeede you haue sufficiently branded the vice of adultery, and laid out the vglinesse thereof, that all men may behold it starke naked, and abhorre it. If any man (not withstanding all this) will venture vpon it, he may bee said to bee a most desperate monster. For what doth hee else, but as it were put his finger into the Lions mouth, and (as it were) take the Beare by the tooth? and they may well know what will follow, and what they may looke for. Let all men therefore in time take heede to themselues, and to their owne soules,

as

as they will answer it at their vttermost perill, at the dreadfull day of iudgement, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed. But now one thing resteth; to wit, that you should shew vs the speciall roots and causes of adultery.

Theol. There bee fiue speciall causes of it: The first is our naturall corruption: for the very spawne and seed of all sinne is our corrupt nature: and this, of all other, is a most inherent sinne, as witnesseth the Apostle Iames, saying: When lust hath conceiued, it bringeth forth sinne: and sinne when it is perfected, bringeth forth death. Iam.1.15.

The second is gluttony, and fulnesse of bread: For when men haue filled their bellies, and crammed their paunches, as full of good cheere, wine, and strong drinke, as their skinnes can hold; what are they mét for, or what mind they else, but adultery and vncleanenesse: And therefore well saith one: Great nourishment & grosse food, is the shop of lust. The heathen Poet could skill to say, *Sine Cerere & Bacchi friget Venus*, without meat and drinke lust waxeth cold. And to this effect the wise King saith, that Their eyes shall behold strange women, whose hearts are set vpon wine and belly-cheere. Pro.23.3. & 33.

And therefore he aduiseth all men not to looke vpon the wine when it appeareth red, when it sheweth his colour in the cuppe: or

stirreth

stirreth very kindly: and that for feare of this after-clap. An ancient writer saith to the same purpose: He that delicately pampereth his belly, and yet would ouercome the spirit of fornication, is like to him that will quench a flame of fire with oyle.

Gregorius Nazianz.

Therefore to close vp this point, sure it is, though men pray, heare, and read much, and bee otherwise well disposed: yet, except they bee abstemious in diet, they will be much troubled with lust.

The third cause of adultery is Idlenesse: for when men are lazie, luskish, and idle, having nothing to doe, they lie wide open to adultery; and lust creepeth into them. Some Historiographers write, the Crab-fish is very desirous to eat Oysters: but because she cannot perforce open them. Shee watcheth her time when they open themselues vnto the sun after the tide, and then shee putteth in her claw, and pulleth out the Oyster. Euen so Satan watcheth his opportunity against vs, that he may infect and breathe into vs all filthy lusts, and adulterous desires, when we lie open vnto him by idlenesse. Wisely therefore to this point saith the Greeke Poet: Much rest nourisheth lust. And another Poet saith: *Quaritur Ægystius quare sit factus adulter. In promptu causa est: desidiosus erat.*

Hesiodus.

Slothfull lazinesse is the cause of adultery, and

And therefore a nother saith: Eschew Idlenesse, and cut the very sinewes of lust. Otia fi tol las, perier Cupidinis arcus.

The fourth cause of Adultery, is wanton apparell: which is a minstrelleſſe, that pipes vp a dance vnto whoredome. But of this enough before.

The 5ft and last cause of adultery, is the hope of impunity, or escaping of punishment. For many beeing blinded and hardned by Satan, thinke they shall never be called to an account for it: And because they can bleare the eyes of men, and carry this sinne so closely vnder a cloud that it shall never come to light, they thinke all is safe, and that God seeth them not. And therefore Iob saith: The eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twi-light: and saith, None eye shall see mee. And in another place: How shall God know? Can he iudge through the dark cloud? But verily, verily, though the adulterer doe never so closely and cunningly conuey his sinne vnder a canopie, yet the time will come, when it shall be disclosed, to his eternall shame. For God will bring euery work to iudgement, with euery secret thought: whether it be good or euill. For he hath set our most secret sins in the sight of his countenance. And he will lighten the things that are hid in darknesse, and make the counsels of the heart manifest. For this cause Iob saith: When I sinne thou watchest

Iob 24.15.

Iob 23.13.

Eccl.12. 24.

Psal.90.

1.Cor.4.

Iob 10.

me, and wilt not purge me from my sin.

Phil. Now you haue shewed vs the causes of adultery, I pray you shew vs the remedies.

Theol. There be fiue remedies for adultery, which no doubt will greatly preuaile, if they be well practised.

Phil. Which be they?

Six remedies of adultery.

Theol. Labour.
Abstinence.
Temperance.
Prayer.
Restraint of senses.
Shunning of womens company, and all occasions whatsoeuer.

Phil. Well Syr, now you haue waded deepe enough in the second signe of damnation: I pray you let vs proceede to the third, which is couetousnesse. And as you haue layed naked the two former, so I pray you strip this starke naked also, that all men may see what an vgly monster it is, and therefore hate it and abhor it.

Theol. I would willingly satisfie your mind: but in this point I shall neuer doe it sufficiently. For no heart can conceiue, or tongue sufficiently vtter the loathsomnesse of this vice. For couetousnesse is the foulest fiend, and blackest diuell of all the rest. It is euen great Beelzebub himselfe. Therefore I shall neuer be able fully to describe it vnto you: but I will doe what I can to

to strip it, and whip it stark naked. And howsoever the men of this earth and blind worldlings, take it to be most sweet, beautifull and amiable, and therefore doe embrace it, entertaine it, and welcome it, as though there were some happinesse in it: yet, I hope, when I haue shewed them the face thereof in a glasse (euen the true glasse of Gods Word) they will be no more in such loue, but quite out of conceit with it. I will therefore hold out this glasse vnto them.

Saint Paul to Timothy brandeth this sin in the forehead and boareth it in the eares, that all men may know it, and auoid it, when hee saith, Couetousnesse is the root of all euill. Our Lord Iesus alloqueth vs a watchword to take heede of it, saying: Take heede and beware of couetousnesse. As if he should say, Touch it not, come not nere it, it is the very breath of the Diuell, it is present death, and the very rats-bane of the soule. The Apostle laieth out the great danger of this sinne; and doth exceedingly grinde the face of it, when he saith, That the end of all such as minde earthly things, is damnation. Let all carnall worldlings, and muckish minded men lay this to heart, and consider well of it, least they say one day, Had I wist.

1. Tim. 6. 10.

Luk. 12. 15.

Phil. 3. 19.

Phil. Good Syr, lay open vnto vs the true nature of couetousnesse, and what it is, that we may more perfectly discerne it.

Theol. Couetousnesse is an immoderate desire of having.

Phil. I hope you doe not thinke frugalitie, thriftinesse, and good husbandry, to bee couetousnesse.

Theol. Nothing lesse. For they be things commanded; being done in the feare of God, and with a good conscience.

Phil. Doe you not thinke it lawfull also for men to doe their worldly businesse, and to vse faithfulnesse and diligence in their callings, that they may prouide for themselues and their families?

Theol. Yes no doubt. And the rather, if they do these things with calling vpon God for a blessing vpon the workes of their hands, and vse praier and thanksgiuing before and after their labor; taking heed all the day long of the common corruptions of the world: as swearing, cursing, lying, dissembling, deceiuing, greedy getting, &c.

Phil. Wherin, I pray you, doth couetousnesse especially consist?

Theol. In the greedy desire of the minde. For we may lawfully doe the workes of our calling, and play the good husbands and good huswiues: but we must take heede that distrustfulnesse, and inward greedinesse of the world doe not catch our hearts. For then we are set on fire, and vtterly vndone.

Phil. Sith couetousnes is especially of the heart, how may we know certainely when the heart is infected?

Theol. There be foure speciall signes of the hearts infection.

Phil. Which be they?

Theol. The first is an eager and sharp-set desire of getting. Therefore the holy Ghost saith: He that hasteth to be rich, shall not be vnpunished. And againe: An heritage is hastily gotten at the beginning: but the end thereof shall not bee blessed. The Heathen man also saith: No man can be both iustly and hastily rich.

Prou. 28.

Pro. 20.

Demosthenes in Olinth.

The second is a pinching and niggardly keeping of our owne: that is, when men (being able to giue) will hardly part with any thing, though it be to neuer so holy and good vse. And when at last, with much adoe, or shame they giue something, it commeth heauily from them (God wot) and scantly.

The third is the neglect of holy duetie: that is, when mens mindes are so taken vp with the loue of earthly things, that they begin to slacke and cole in matters of Gods worship.

The fourth and last is a trusting in riches, and staying vpon them, as though our liues were maintained by them, or did consist onely in them: which thing our Lord Iesus flatly denieth, saying: Though a man haue abundance,

yet his life consisteth not in the things that he hath, Luke 12.15.

These then are foure euident signes and tokens, whereby we may certainely discerne, that mens hearts and entralls are infected with couetousnesse.

Phil. You haue very well satisfied vs in this point, Now let vs vnderstand the originall causes of Couetousnesse.

Two causes of Couetousnesse.

Theol. There bee two speciall causes of Couetousnesse: The one is the ignorance and distrust of Gods prouidence.

The other is the want of tasting, and feeling of heauenly things. For till men taste better things, they will make much of these: till they feele heauen, they will loue earth: till they be religious, they will be couetous.

Therefore the cause is soone espyed, why men are so sharp-set vpon these outward things, and doe so admire riches, worldly pompe, pleasures, and treasures: Because they know no better, they neuer had taste nor feeling of those things which are eternall.

Phil. Now, as you haue shewed vs the causes of Couetousnesse, so let vs also heare of the effects.

Theol. If I once enter into this, I shall bee entangled and wound vp in a maze, where I know not how to get out against. For the euill

effects

effects of this vice are so many, and so great, that I know not almost where to begin, or where to end. Notwithstanding, I will enter into it, get out how I can.

Phil. If you doe but giue vs some taste of them, it shall suffice.

Theol. Then will I briefly dispatch things in order. And first of all, I reason from the words of the Apostle before alledged, That if couetousnesse, and the loue of money be the root of all euill; then it is the root of idolatrie, the root of murther, the root of theft, the root of lying, the root of swearing, the root of symony, the root of bribery, the root of vsury, the root of lawing, the root of all contentions in the Church, and the root of all brabbling and brawling in the Common-wealth. Moreouer, it spreadeth farre and neere, it dwelleth in euery house, in euery towne, in euery citie: it prieth into euery corner, it creepeth into euery heart, it annoieth our Physicians, it infecteth our Diuines, it choaketh our Lawyers, it wounderth our Farmers, it banetb our Gentlemen, it murthereth our Tradesmen, it bewitcheth our Marchants, it stingeth our Mariners. O couetousnesse, couetousnesse! It is the poison of all things, the wound of Christianity, the bane of all goodnesse. For couetousnesse marres all: it marreth all, euery where, in all places, in all degrees, among all

persons. It marreth marriages: for it coupleth young to old, and old to young. It marreth hospitality, it marreth all good house-keeping, it marreth almes-deedes, it marreth Religion, it marreth Professors, it marreth Ministers, it marreth Magistrates, it marreth all things. And therefore, what sinne so grieuous, what euill so odious, what vice so enormous, as this? For this cause it was prettily said of one: That all other vices are but factors to Couetousnesse. and serue for Porters to fetch and bring-in her liuing. She maketh symony her drudge, bribery her drudge, vsury her drudge, deceit her drudge, swearing her drudge, lying her drudge. O what a diuell incarnate is this, that setteth so many vices a-worke, and hath so many factors and vnderlings to serue her turne! Are they not in a pretty case, thinke you, that are infected with this sinne? Oh they are in a most miserable case. It had beene good they had neuer beene borne. For being aliue, they are dead: dead, I meane, in their soules. For Couetousnes is soules poison and soules bane. Couetousnesse is the strongest poison to the soule that is. It is a confection of all the Spiders, Toades, Snakes, Adders, Scorpions, Basiliskes, and all other the most venemous vermine of the whole world. If the diuell can get vs to take downe but one penny weight of it, it is enough, hee desires no more.

For

For presently we fall down starke dead. Wherefore the Apostle saith: They that will be rich (he meaneth in all haste, by hoke or by crooke) fall into temptations & snares, and into many foolish and noisome lusts, which drowne men in destruction and perdition. For as couetousnesse is rank poison to the soule: so the Apostle compareth it to the deep gulfe wherein thousands are drowned. And therefore hee adueth in the same place: But thou, O man of God, flie these things. In which words hee doth most gravely aduise all the Ministers of the word of God, to take heed of it. For as it is dangerous in all men: so is it most dangerous and offensiue in Preachers of the Gospell. 1. Tim. 6.

Phil. Indeede it must needes bee granted, that Couetousnesse is a very grieuous sinne: yea euen a Monster with seuen heads. Yet for all that, we see in this our iron age, how many of all sorts are infected with it, and how few will giue any thing to any holy vse. Most men now-adayes haue nothing to spare for Christ, nothing for his Gospell, nothing for his Church, nothing for the poore children of God and needie members of Christ. Christ is little beholden vnto them: for they will doe nothing for him, no not so much as speake a good word in his cause, or the cause of his poore Saints. Euery little thing with them

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is too much for God, & good men. For when they come to giuing vnto holy and necessary vses, then they will stick at a penny, and grutch at a groat, and euery thing is too much: But to bestow vpon themselues, nothing is too much. Nothing is too much for lust, for pleasure, for backe, belly, and building, for cards and dice, for whores and harlots, for rioting and reuelling, for Tauernes and Brothel-houses. Hundreds and thousands are little enough, and too little for their expenses this way. It is lamentable to consider, what masses of mony are spent and bestowed vpon these things. But alas, alas, how heauy an account are they to make in the day of the Lord, which so spend their lands, liuings and reuenewes! I quake to thinke what shall become of them at last. It were well for them, if they might be in no worse case than a Crocodile or a Curre-Dog.

Theol. It is most certaine that you say: and we all haue great cause to lament it, and to take vp the old complaint of the Prophet Ieremie, saying: From the least of them, euen vnto the greatest of them, euery one is giuen vnto Couetousnesse: and from the Prophet euen vnto the Priests, they all deale falsly. And another Prophet saith: They build vp Zion with bloud, and Ierusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof iudge for rewards, and the Priests thereof teach

Ier.6.16.

Mich.3.22

teach for hire, & the Prophets thereof prophecy for mony: yet will they lean vpon the Lord, and say: Is not the Lord amongst vs? No euill can come vnto vs. **But these holy Prophets, and men of God, doe fully describe vnto vs the state of our time: wherein, though all bee corrupted, yet wee beare our selues stoutly vpon God; wee presume of his fauour, because of our outward profession, and say in our hearts: No euill can come vnto vs.**

Asun. You say very true, Sir. The world was neuer so set vpon couetousnesse, and men were neuer so greedily giuen to the world, as now adaies. And yet (in truth) there is no cause why men should bee so sharpe-set vpon this world. For this world is but vanity: and all is but pelfe and trash. Fie on this mucke.

Phil. Many such men as you are, can skill to giue good words, and say: Fie on this world; all is but vanity: and yet for all that, in your daily practice, you are neuer the lesse set vpon the world, nor neuer the more seeke after God. You heare the word of God no whit the more, you read no whit the more, you pray neuer the more; which euidently sheweth, that all your faire speeches, and protestations, are nought else but hypocrisie and leazing. Your heart is not with God, for all this. All is but words, there is no such feeling in the heart.

And

And therefore I may iustly say to you, as God
Deut.5. himselfe said to his people: This People haue
8. said well, all that they haue said. Oh, that there were an heart in them to feare mee, and keepe my commandements!

Theol. His words indeede are good, if his heart were according. For all things considered, there is no cause why men should be so giuen to this world: for they must leaue it when they haue done all that they can. As wee say, To day a man, to morrow none. And as the Apostle saith: Wee brought nothing into this
1.Tim.6. world: and it is certaine, wee shall carrie nothing out: We must all die, we know not how soone: why therefore should men set their hearts vpon such vncertainties, and deceiueable things? for all things in this world are more light than a feather, more brittle than glasse, more fleeting than a shadow, more vanishing than smoake, more vnconstant than the winde. Doubtlesse, saith the Prophet Dauid, man walketh in a shadow, and disquieteth himselfe in vaine: he heapeth vp riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them, Psalme 39 6 I wonder therefore, that these Moules and Mucke-wormes of this earth, should so minde these shadowish things, and so dote on them as they doe. If they were not altogether hardned and blinded by the diuell, they would not be so merely knit

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to the clod and the penny as they are; thinking, and alwayes imagining, that there is no happinesse but in these things, which are but dung, and drosse: and at last they will give vs the slip, when we thinke our selues most sure of them.

The wise King, who had the greatest experience of these things that euer man had (for he enioyed whatsoeuer this world could afford, vpward and downeward, backward and forward) yet could he finde nothing in them but vanity and vexation of spirit. Moreouer, he flatly auoucheth, That all these things, riches, wealth, honour, pleasures and treasures, will most notably deceiue vs in the end, give vs the slip, and bee gone. For he compareth riches, and all the glory of the World, to an Eagle or Hauke, which a man holdeth vpon his fist, stroketh her, maketh much of her, taketh great delight & pleasure in her, and saith he will not take ten pounds for her: yet all on the sudden she taketh her flight, and flieth vp into the ayre, and he neuer seeth her more, nor she him. The words of the holy Ghost are these: Wilt thou cause thine eyes to flie after them? (meaning riches) Thou maist: but they will not be found. For they will make themselues wings like to the Eagle, which flieth vp to Heauen. From thence wee may learne, that though wee set our hearts neuer so much on any thing here below: yet at Pro. 23. 5

the

the last it shall be taken from vs, or we from it.

Therefore all worldly men doe but weaue the Spiders webbe, and may fitly be compared to the silly Spider, who toileth her selfe, and laboureth all the weeke long to finish vp her webbe, that shee may lodge her selfe in it, as in her owne house and freehold. But alas, at the weekes end, a Maid in a moment, with one brush of a broome, dispossesseth her of her inheritance, which shee had purchased with great labour and much adoe. Euen so, when the men of this world, haue with much care and trauell, purchased great lands and reuennes, and gathered all that they can: yet on the suddaine, Death (with one stroke of his direfull dart) will make them giue vp the ghost: and then where are they? It was prettily therefore said of a man in the light of nature: No man hath euer liued so pappily in this life, but in his life time many things haue befallen him, for the which he hath wished rather to die than to liue. And assuredly, I thinke there was neuer any man liued any one day vpon the face of this earth, but some griefe or other either did, or iustly might inuade his minde ere night: either in the temptations of the world, the flesh, or the diuell; or in regard of soule, of body, goods or name: in regard of wife, children, friends, or neighbours: in regard of dangers to Prince, Estate, Church

or

or Common-wealth: in regard of casualties, and losse by water, by fire, by sea or by land. What a life therefore is this, that hath not one good day in it? Who would desire to dwell long in it? For it lyeth open euery day to manifold miseries, dangers, losses, casualties, reproches, shame, infamy, pouerty, sicknesse, diseases, collickes, agues, tooth-ache, head-ache, backe-ache, bone-ache, and a thousand calamities.

Phil. You haue very well described vnto vs the vanity of this life, and that no day is free from one sorrow or another, one griefe or other: the which thing our Lord Iesus ratifieth in the reason which hee bringeth, why men should not distrustfully care for to morrow; For saith he, Sufficient to the day is the euill thereof. Or, as some reade it, The day hath enough with his own griefe. Wherein he doth plainly shew that euery day hath his sorrow, his euill, his griefe, and his thwart. But I pray you proceede further in this point.

Theol. This I say further: That when men haue swinked and sweat, carked and cared, moiled and turmoiled, drudged and droiled, by night & by day, by sea and by land, with much care and sorrow, much labour and griefe, to rake together the things of this life; yet at last all will away againe, and we must end where we began.

For

For, as Iob said: Naked wee came into the world, and naked we must goe out, Iob 1. For euen as a wind-mill beateth it selfe, maketh a great noise, whistleth and whisketh about from day to day all the yeare long; yet at the yeares end standeth still where it begunne, being not moued one foot, backward or forward: so when men haue bluftred and blowne all that they can, and haue euen run themselues out of breath, to scrape vp the commodities of the earth, yet at last they must (spite of their beards) end where they began; end with nothing, as they began with nothing; end with a winding sheet, as they began with swaddling clouts. For what is become of the greatest Monarches, Kings, Princes, Potentates, and Magnificoes, that euer the World had? Where is Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes, Alexander, Cæsar, Pompey, Scipio, and Hannibal? Where are the valiant Henries, and noble Edwards of England? Are they not all gone downe to the house of oblivion? Are they not all returned to their dust, and their thoughts perish? Though they were as Gods, yet haue they died as a man, and are fallen like others.

Who now careth for them? who talketh of them? who feareth them? who regardeth them? doe not beggars tread vpon them? Yet while they liued, they were the Lords of the world;

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they were as terrible actions, fearfull to all men, full of pomp and glory, dignity & maiesty. They ploughed vp all things, they bare all before them; and who but they? But now they haue giuen vp the ghost, and are (as Iob saith) gon downe to the house appointed for all the liuing. Their pomp is descended with them, and all their glory is buried in the ashes. They are now couered vnder a clod, cast out into a vault, made companions to toads, and the worms do eat them: and what is became of their soules is most of all to be feared. Iob. 30. 23.

Thus we see, how all flesh doth but make a vain shew for a while vpon this Theatre of misery, fetcheth a compasse about, and is presently gon. For, as the Poet saith, *Serius aut citius sedem properamus ad vnam:* First or last, wee must all to the graue.

Asun. You haue made a very good speech. It doth me good to hear it. I wonder, all these things considered, that men should be so wholly giuen to this world, as they are. I think the Diuell hath bewitched them: For they shall carry nothing with them when they die, but their good deedes and their ill.

Theol. The Drudges and Snudges of this World may very fitly be compared to a Kings Sumpter-horse, which goeth loaden all the day long with as much gold and treasure as hee

can beare; but at night his treasure is taken from him, he is turned into a sory dirty stable, and hath nothing left him but his galled backe: Euen so the rich Cormorants & Caterpillers of the earth, which here haue treasured and horded vp great heapes of gold and siluer (with the which they trauell loaden thorough this World) shall in the end be stript out of all, let downe into their graue, and haue nothing left them but their galled consciences; with the which they shall be tumbled downe into the dungeon of eternall darknesse.

Phil. Wherein doth the sting and strength of the world especially consist?

Theol. Euen as the great strength of Sampson lay in his haire, so the great strength of the world lyeth in her two breasts: the one of pleasure, the other of profit. For shée, like a notable strumpet, by laying out of these her breasts, doth bewitch the sonnes of men, and alloreth thousands to her lust. For if she cannot win them with the one breast, yet she gaineth them with the other: if not with pleasure, then with profit: if not with profit, then with pleasure. He is an odde man of a thousand, that sucketh not of the one breast or the other. But sure it is, which soeuer he sucketh he shall be poisoned. For she giueth none other milke but ranke poison. The world therefore is like to an alluring Iael, which

sitteth at her doore to entice vs to come in, and eat of the milke of her pleasures: but when she hath once got vs in; she is ready (euen while we are eating) with her hammer and her naile, to pierce thorow our braines. Iudg. 21.

Phil. I see plainely, this world is a very strumpet, a strong baite, and a snaring net, wherin thousands are taken. It is very birdlime which doth so belime our affections, that they cannot ascend vpward. It is like the weights of a clocke, hanged vpon our soules, which draw them down to the earth: it naileth vs fast down to the ground: It mortereth vs into clay: It maketh vs abominable vnto God. For I remember God made a Law, That whosoeuer goeth with his breast vpon the ground, should be abominable vnto vs. How much more these carnall worldlings, which are fast sodred to the earth! Leu. 11.

Theol. The Apostle S. Iames, seeing into the deepe wickednesse of this world, and knowing right well how odious it maketh vs in the sight of God, crieth out against it, tearming it adultery, and all worldlings adulterers, because they forsake Christ their true husband, and wherein giue their hearts to this world. O ye adulterers and adulteresses, saith he, know ye not that the amitie of this world is the enmity of God? Whosoeuer therefore will be made a friend to Iam. 4.

this world, makes himselfe the enemy of God. And who dare stand forth and say, I will be the enemy of God? Who therefore dare be a worldling? For, euery worldling is the enemy of God: What then will become of you, O yee wicked worldlings?

Phil. It appeareth then plainly by the Scriptures, that the excessiue loue of this world, and vnsatiable desire of hauing, is a most dangerous thing: and men do they know not what, in seeking so greedily after it.

pho- *Theol.* The Heathen man will rise vp in
is. iudgement against vs: for, he saith, Vnsatiableness is the foulest euill among mortall men. But many of our Sea-gulfes and Whirl-poles make no conscience of it. They thinke it is no sinne: they deuoure and swallow vp all, and yet are neuer satisfied. They will haue all, and more than all, and the diuell and all. The whole world cannot satisfie their mind: but God must creat new worlds to content them. These men are sicke of the golden dropsie: the more they haue, the more they desire. The loue of money increaseth, as money it selfe increaseth. But the
celes. 5. Scripture saith, He that loueth siluer shall not be satisfied with siluer. Oh therefore, that we would striue earnestly to get out of this gulfe
poc. 12. of hell, and tread the Moon (that is, all worldly things) vnder our feete: as it is spoken of the Church:

Church: and that wee would set our affections on the things that are aboue, and not on ꝑ things that are beneath: that we would flee an high pitch, and soar aloft as the Eagles, looking down at this world, and all things in it, as at our feet, contemning it, and treading the very glory of it vnder our feete, that it may neuer haue more power ouer vs.

Phil. Oh happy, and twice happy are they that can doe so! And I beseech the Almightie God to giue vs his holy Spirit, wherby we may be carried aboue this world, into the mountains of Myrrhe, and the mountaines of Spices. Cant.
For, how happy a thing is it, to haue our conuersation in heauen! that is, to haue an inward conuersation with God, by much prayer, reading, meditation, & heauenly affections. This indeed is to climb vp aboue the world, and to conuerse in the chambers of peace. O therefore that we could seriously & throughly conceiue and consider of this world as it is! that wee would well weigh the vanitie of it, and the excellency of that which is to come, that so wee might loath the one, & loue the other; despise the one, & imbrace the other; loue God more than euer we did, and this world less. For what is this world, but vanity of vanities?

Anti. You do exceedingly abase that which some make their god. You speake con-

temptuously of that which most men haue in greatest price and admiration. You disgrace that which multitudes would grace. You make light of that, which numbers make greatest account of. Let vs therefore heare your reasons. Shew vs more fully what it is; describe it vnto vs.

Theol. The World is a sea of glasse, a pageant of fond pelights, a theatre of vanity, a labyrinth of error, a gulfe of griefe, a stie of filthines, a vale of misery, a spectacle of woe, a riuer of teares, a stage of deceit, a cage full of Owles, a den of Scorpions, a wilderness of Wolues, a cabbin of Beares, a whirl-winde of passions, a faigned Comedy, a delectable phrensie, where is false delight, assured griefe, certaine sorrow, vncertaine pleasure, lasting woe, fickle wealth, long beautiefie, short ioy.

Phil. Now you haue indeede described it to the full, and layed it out (as it were) in orient colours. And a man would thinke, he were bewitched or stark mad, which hereafter should set his minde on it. But yet I am desirous to heare a little more of that which I asked you before: wherein the strength and poison of the world doth especially consist.

Theol. In this lieth a great strength of the world, that it draweth downe the stars of heauen, and maketh them fall to the earth, as it is

said of the Dragons taile, Apocal. 12. which is ambition, couetousnes, & the loue of this world. For we may wonder and lament, to see how the loue of these things hath wounded and ouerborne many excellent seruants of God, both Preachers and professors of the Gospell: which thing doth plainly argue the strength of it. For it is the strongest and the very last engine, that Satan vseth to impugne vs withall, when none other will preuaile. For when no temptation could fasten vpon Christ, he bringeth forth this last weapon which neuer faileth, All these things will I giue thee; shewing him the glory of the whole world. So then he (hauing experience of this, that it neuer faileth) thought to haue ouercome Christ himselfe with it. Here therefore lieth the very sting and strength of the world and the diuell. For whom hath he not taken with, All these things will I giue thee? whom hath he not wounded? whom hath hee not deceiued? whom hath he not ouerthrowne? With this he enticed Baalam: with this he beguiled Achan: with this he ouerthrew Iudas: with this he bewitched Demas: with this in these our dayes he deceiueth many of excellent gifts. For assuredly he is a Phœnix amongst men, which is not ouercome with this. Yea is a wonderment in the world, that is not moued with money. Mat. 4.

Phil. I am now fully satisfied for this matter,

ter. But one thing commeth often into my mind; to wit, that these miserable worldlings can haue no sound comfort in their pleasures and profits, because they haue no comfort in God, nor peace in their owne consciences,

Theol. You say very true. It is impossible that men, loueng this world, should haue any sound comfort in God. For no man can serue two masters, both God and riches. Their case therefore is very dangerous and fearfull, though they neuer see it, nor feele it: as I will shew you by a plaine example. Put case one of these great rich worldlings should bee clothed in velvet and cloth of gold, in most stately manner, and also should bee set at his table, furnished with all the vanities of the world, should be attended and waited vpon by many, in most Lordly and pompous manner, should sit in his goodly dining chamber, all glittering like gold, should haue his first, second, and third seruice serued in with minstrels and instruments of musicke, in most royall sort, bee sitting in his chaire like a King in his throne: yet for all this, if a dagger should be held to his heart all this while, readie to stab him; what pleasure, what ioy, what comfort could he haue in all the rest? Euen so, whatsoever pompe or pleasures wicked worldlings haue here below, yet their guilty and hellish conscience is as it were a dagger held alwayes

hard

hard to their heart, so as they can haue no sound comfort in any thing. Or let me giue it you thus: Put case, a man hath committed high treason, and were therefore apprehended, arraigned, and condemned to be hanged, drawne and quartered: what then can comfort him in such a case? can mirth, can musicke, can gold, can siluer, can lands, can liuings? No, no, none of all these can help him, or giue him any comfort. For the continuall thoughts of death doe so gripe him at the heart, that none of all these can do him any good, or any whit mitigate his griefe. What then is the thing that may comfort him in this case? Onely a pardon, sealed with the Kings broad seale, and subscribed with his owne hand. For, as soone as he hath got this, his heauy heart reuiueth, and leaps for ioy. This then assuredly is the very case of all prophane Atheists and Worldlings, who are not assured of the King of heauen his pardon for their sinne: and then, what ioy can they haue either in their meat, drinke, goods, cattell, wiues, children, lands, reuenues, or any thing whatsoever? For, the dreadfull thoughts of hell doe ever-lones crosse them inwardly, and quite damp & dash all their mirth. Their own consciences will not be stilled, but in most terrible manner rise vp and giue euidence against them, telling them daily, they shall be damned, how merrie and iocond soever they

seeme to be in this world; setting a good face on the matter. For, sure it is, that inwardly they haue many a cold pull, and many heart-gripes. And all their mirth and iollity, is but a giggling from the teeth outward; they can haue no sound comfort within. And therefore the wise King saith; Euen in laughter the heart is sorrowfull: and the end of that mirth is heauinesse. Likewise saith the holy man Iob; Terrors of conscience come vpon the wicked man like waters: in the night a whirle-wind carrieth him away secretly. Eliphas the Temanite anouched the same point, saying: The wicked man is continually as one that trauelleth of childe; a sound of feare in his eares, &c. Thus then we see, that howsoeuer many carnall Atheists, and vngodly persons seeme outwardly to float aloft in all mirth and iollity, bearing it out (as wee say) at the breast: yet inwardly are they pinched with terrors, and most horrible conuulsions of conscience.

Pro. 14. 13.

Iob 27. 20.

Iob 15. 20.

Antil. You haue spoken many things very sharply against couetousnesse: but in my mind, so long as a man couets nothing but his owne, he cannot be said to be couetous.

Theol. Yes that he may. For, not only is he couetous, which greedily desireth other mens goods; but euen he also which ouer-niggardly and pinchingly holdeth fast his owne, and is such

a Niser

a Niler, that he will part with nothing. We sée the world is full of such pinch-pennies, that will let nothing goe, except it be wrung from them per force, as a key out of Hercules hand.

The gripple muck-rakers had as lieue part with their blood as their goods. They will pinch their owne backs and bellies, to get their god into their chests. And when they haue once got him there, will they easily part with him, trow ye? No, no: a man will part with his god for no mans pleasure. He will eate pease-bread, and drinke small drinke, rather than he will diminish his god. Therefore the Scripture saith: Eate not the meat of him that hath an e- Pro. 32. 6.
uill eye: and desire not his dainty dishes. For as he grudgeth his owne soule, so will he say vnto thee; Eat and drink, when his heart is not with thee. Thou shalt vomit thy morsels, which thou hast eaten, and lose thy pleasant speeches. The old saying is, The couetous man wanteth as well that which he hath, as that which he hath not; because he hath no vse of that which he hath. So then you sée, there is a great strength of couetousnesse, in the niggardly keeping of our owne.

Anti. Yet for all this, men must follow their worldly businesse, and lay to liue. For it is an hard world, and goods are not easie to come by. Therefore men must ply their businesse,

or else they may go beg and starue.

Theol. I deny not, but that you may follow the works of your calling diligently, so it be in the feare of God, and with a good conscience, as I told you before: but this greedinesse and grippleneſſe, God doth condemne, and also thinke ſuch loue of money.

Antil. Beleeue me, I know no bodie that hates it: I cannot ſee but that all men loue gold and ſilver.

Theol. It is one thing to vſe theſe things, another thing to loue them, and ſet our hearts vpon them. For, the Scripture ſaith: If riches increaſe, ſet not your heart vpon them, *Pſa.* 62. 10.

1.Iohn.2. S. Iohn alſo ſaith: Loue not this world, nor the things that are in this world. He ſaith not, Vſe not this world; but, Loue not this world. For, vſe it we may: loue it we may not. Therefore the

1.Cor.7. Apoſtle ſaith, that, They which vſe this world, ſhould be as though they vſed it not. Where, he allowe th a ſober and moderate vſe of the things of this life, but he ſeeme of Godly. We muſt vſe this world for neceſſities ſake; as we vſe meat and drink; taking no more of this world than néeds muſt, for feare of ſurfetting. The holy Ghoſt ſaith: Let your conuerſation be with-

Heb.13.5. out couetouſneſſe, and be content with things preſent. Happy is that man therefore that is well content with his preſent eſtate whatſoever,

and carrieth himselfe moderately and comfortably therein. For, the Spirit saith: There is no profit to a man vnder the Sun, but that he eat and drink, and delight his soule with the profit of his labours. I saw also this, that this is of the hand of God. In which words, the prudent King saith thus much in effect: That this is all the good we can attaine vnto in this world, euen to take a sober and comfortable vse of the things of this life, which God bestoweth vpon vs. And further he auouchetb; That thus to vse them aright, and with sound comfort, is a very rare gift of God. For, as one saith, Hee is a wise man that is not grieued for the things which hee hath not; but doth reioyce in the things that hee hath, vsing them to Gods glory, and his owne comfort. So then I conclude this point, and returne to you an answer thus: That we may, in sober and godly manner, vse gold, siluer, and the things of this life: but at no hand to ouer-loue them, or giue our hearts vnto them.

Gerg. Naz.

Antil. Well: yet for all this I cannot see, but that these preachers and professors, these learned men and precise fellows, are euen as eager of the world, and as couetous as any other.

Theol. Now you shew your venemous spirit against better men than your selfe. And I haue a four-fold answer for you. First, I answer, that

that although godly men may be somewhat ouertoken this way, and ouerspirt a little, yet they break not out so grosly as others. Secondly, if God leane them sometimes to be ouercome of the World, yet he, in his great wisedome and mercy, turneth it to their good. For thereby he first humbleth them, and afterward raiseth them vp again. And so all things work together for good to them that loue God. Thirdly, I answer, we must line by rules, & not by examples. For men & best of Gods people haue had their wants and weakenesses. Therefore we may not frame rules to line by, out of the infirmities of the most excellent seruants of God. Wicked therefore and impious is their allegation, who alledge Dauids adultery, Lots drunkennesse, Peters fall, Abrahams slips, Salomons weaknesse, &c. for a shelter and defence of themselues in the like sins. Lastly, I answer, that you greatly wound your selfe in your owne speech: so far off are you from mending your market any whit thereby. For if Preachers, and other godly men (after many prayers, teares, and much meanes vsed) cannot scape scot-free, but sometimes are wounded and almost ouerthrowne, by the World and the Diuell: what then shall become of you, which vse no meanes at all, nor any gaine-striuing, but willingly give place to the Diuell? If the Diuell did ouer-mastar Dauid, Lot, Sampson, Salomon,

Rom. 8.

Salomon, and other such excellent Worthies; alas, what shall become of mere worldlings, and atheists? If the most valiant men, and chiefe Captaines in a battell goe vobone, what shall become of the faint-hearted souldiers? and as Saint Peter saith, If the righteous scarce be saued, where shall the wicked and vngodly appeare? So then I take you at the rebound, and returne your owne weapon vpon your selfe; That sith godly men cannot escape ouer this World without blowes, what shall become of them that know not what godlinesse meaneth? 1. Pet. 4. 18.

Antil. Yet I say once againe, that men must liue, men must lay vp for this world: we cannot liue by the Scriptures. And as for that which you call couetousnesse, it is but good husbandrie.

Theol. I thought we should haue it at last. Now you haue paid it home: you are come to the old byasse, and as a Hare to her old fourme, and her old couert. For this is the very couert and thicket of the World, wherein they would hide couetousnesse: but I will do what I can to hunt you out of it by Scriptures.

First, Salomon saith: He that spareth more than is right, shall surely come to poverty. Pro. 11. 24. Then you see, that couetousnesse bringeth pouerty. Thus therefore I reason: That which [illegible] get

geth pouerty is no good-husbandry: but couetousnes, and too-much sparing, bringeth pouerty: therefore it is no good-husbandry. The same Salomon saith, He that is giuen to gaine, troubleth his owne house. That is, the couetous man is an occasion of many euils in his estate, & family. From this Scripture I do thus reason: That which troubleth a mans house, is no good husbandry: but couetousnesse troubleth a mans house, therefore it is no good-husbandry. Last of all, the old Prouerb saith, Couetousnes bringeth nothing home: And therefore it is no good husbandry. For often times we see, that men, for couetousnesse of more, lose that which otherwise they might haue had. One of the wise Heathens saith, Euill gain is as bad as losse. But the couetous man doth seeke after wicked gain, and therefore seeketh losse; and consequently is no good-husband. Another saith, Vniust gain bringeth forth losse and misery. And therefore it is far enough off from vertue and all good-husbandry. Thus then, I hope, you are so hunted both by God and men, that this couert cannot hide you: And therefore you must out of it, and seek some other shelter: for this will not serue your turne.

Hesiodus.

Phocilides.

Phil. Now I must needes say, you haue fully stopt his mouth, and throughly ferreted him out of his deepe burrow. And it is most certain,

taine that you say, that the wise Heathen haue condemned couetousnesse & all vniust gaines; which we both practise and defend: and therefore shall they rise vp in iudgement against vs. But now let vs leaue this cauiller, and proceede in our matters. There is one thing yet remaining, wherein I desire to be satisfied.

Theol. What is that?

Phil. I would gladly know which bee the speciall remedies against couetousnesse.

Theol. There be two speciall remedies, against couetousnesse: to wit, contentation, and the meditation of Gods prouidence.

Phil. Let vs heare somewhat of contentation out of the Scriptures.

Theol. The Apostle saith: Hauing foode and raiment, we must bee therewith content. For we brought nothing into this world; and it is certaine we shall carry nothing out. The Spirit also saith: Let your conuersation bee without couetousnesse, and bee content with your present estate. Againe the Apostle saith: Hee had learned in what estate soeuer he was, therewith to bee content. Note that hee saith, He had learned: for hee had it not of himselfe. For Contentation is the singular gift of God: as it is written: The righteous eateth to the contentation of his soule: but the bellie of the wicked shall want, Pro. 13. 25. An ancient Fa-

1. Tim. 7. 9.

Heb. 12. 3.

Phil. 4.

Cyril in Iohan. 12. ther saith; We ought to accustome our selues to liue of a little, and to bee content; that we may do no wicked or filthy thing for lucres sake. Another saith: He is not poore that hath nothing, but he that desires much. Neither is he rich that hath much, but he that wanteth nothing: for contentation neuer wanteth. There is no griefe in lacking, but where there is immoderate desire of hauing. If we will liue after nature, wee shall neuer be poore: if after our owne appetite, we shall neuer be rich. Well

Chrysost. Hom. 51.

Euripides. therefore said the Poet: Wax not rich vainstly, but iustly: Be content with thine own things: abstaine from other mens. Thus then we see, that both God himselfe (the fountaine of all wisedome) and men also, both in the state of nature and grace, do all iointly auise vs to shine for contentation: and then we shall haue a soueraigne remedy against Couetousnesse.

Phil. Let vs heare somewhat of the second remedy against Couetousnesse.

Theol. An earnest thinking vpon the prouidence of God, is a present remedy against the most foolish & pining carefulnes of men for this life. For if we would seriously weigh and deeply consider the prouident care that God hath had for his children in all ages, touching food & raiment, and how strangely he hath prouided for them; it might suffice to correct this euill in vs,

and minister vnto vs a notable preservative against Couetousnesse.

We read how wonderfully the Lord did prouide for his Prophet Eliah, in the time of the great dearth and drought that was in Israel. Did not the Lord command the Rauens to feed him by the riuer Cherith? Did not the rauens bring him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the euening, and he dranke of the riuer? 1.King

What should I speake how miraculously God prouided for Hagar and her Infant, when they were both cast out of Abrahams house, and brought to great extremity; euen both of them ready to giue vp the ghost for want of food? Gen.21 15.

Did not God help at a pinch, as his manner hath alwayes bin? Did he not send his Angell vnto them, and both comfort them, and prouide for them? What should I speake how strangely God prouided for his Church in the wildernesse? Did he not feed them with Manna from heauen, and gaue them water to drink out of the Rocke? Exod.16 Exod.17 Psal.78

Hath not our heauenly Father made many royall and large promises, that he will prouide necessaries for his children? Shall wee not thinke that he will be as good as his word? Doth he not say: The Lyons lacke and suffer hunger: but they that seeke him, shall want nothing that is good? Doth he not say: Feare him all yee his Saints, for nothing is wanting Psal.34

.84. to them that feare him? **Doth he not say:** No good thing shall bee withheld from them that walke vprightly? **Doth he not say:** Our heauenly Father knoweth, that we haue need of these things; and that all these things shall be
th.6.
et.5.7. cast vpon vs, if we earnestly seek his kingdom? **Did he not bid vs,** Cast all our care vpon him; for he careth for vs? **Doth he not bid vs,** Take
.12. no thought what we shall eate, or what we shall drinke, or wherewith wee shall be clothed? **Meaning thereby, no distracting or distrustfull thought. Doth he not say,** Hee will not leaue
b.13.5. vs, nor forsake vs? **Doth hee not say,** The
l.45. Lord is at hand, in nothing bee carefull? **Are not these large promises sufficient to stay vp our faith in Gods providence? shall we thinke God letteth with vs? shall we thinke he meaneth no such matter? shall we imagine he will not keepe touch? Oh, it were blasphemy once to thinke it. For God is true, and all men liers. He is faithfull that hath promised. His word is more than the faith of a Prince, more than ten thousand Obligations. Why then doe we not rest vpon it? why goe wo any further? why doe wee not take his word? why doe we not depend wholly vpon him? why are wee still couetous? why are we still distrustfull? why do we dissemble and deceiue? Oh ye of little faith! Our Lord Iesus knowing right well the distrustfulnesse**

of our nature, and the deep rote it hath in vs, is not onely content to make these great and roiall promises vnto vs, which were enough, but also strengtheneth and backeth vs with many strong reasons to support our weaknesse in this behalfe. He therefore bringeth vs backe to a due consideration of things. Consider (saith hee) the Rauens: consider the foules of the heauens: for they neither sowe nor reape, nor carry into barnes, and yet God feedeth them, they want nothing. Consider the Lillies how they grow: they neithtr labour nor spinne, yet *Salomon* in all his royalty, was not clothed like one of these: Oh therefore that we would consider these Considers! Oh that we would consider that our life is more worth than meate, and our bodies than raiment! Oh that we would consider, that with all our carking and caring wee can doe no good at all, no not so much as adde one cubite to our stature. Truely, truely, if we would deepely ponder these reasons of our Sauiour, and apply them to our selues, they might serue for a bulwarke and sure defence against couetousnesse. If men would consider how that great King of heauen (who hath his way in the whirle-winde, and the clouds are the dust of his feet) careth for the little Wren & silly Sparrow, how he looketh to them, how he tendreth them, how he prouideth for them euery

Luke

Nah. 1.

ry day, both break-fast, dinner, and supper: it might serue to correct our distrustfulnesse. For who euer saw these, or any other Foule starue for hunger? so good a father, and so good a nurse haue they. And are not we much better than they? Hath not God more care of vs, than of them? Yes verily, a thousand times. For he loueth them, but for our sakes: how much more then doth he loue our selues? Therefore I say again, & again, If we would consider these things, & lay them to heart, they would nip couetousnes on the head, and driue it quite out of our hearts. Let vs consider therefore, that God prouided for man before man was: then how much more will he prouide for man, now that he is? Is he our father, and will he not prouide for vs? Is he our king, and will he not regard vs? Is he our shepheard, and will he not looke to vs? Hath he prouided heauen for vs, and will he not giue vs earth? Hath he giuen vs his Son Christ, and shall he not with him giue vs all things? Doth he prouide for his enemies, and will he not prouide for his friends? Doth he prouide for whoremongers, and will he neglect his chosen? Doth he send his raine, and cause the sun to shine vpon the vniust, and shall he not vpon the iust? Doth he prouide for them which are not of the family, and will hee not prouide for his owne family? Will a man feed his Hogges, and not care for

his seruants? Or will he care for his seruants, and not regard his diuine children? Oh then let vs consider these reasons: let vs remember, that our heauenly Father hath as great care for the preseruation of his creatures, as once he had for their creation. Let vs therefore remember, that our life consisteth not in these things, but in the prouidence of God. Let vs remember, that he which giueth the day, will prouide for vs the things of the day. Let vs remember, that God alwaies giueth for sustentation, though not for satiety. Let vs remember, that God will not famish the soules of the righteous. Let vs remember how God neuer failed his. For who euer trusted in the Lord, and was confounded? Prou. 10. 38.

Phil. What then is the cause that many doe want outward things?

Theol. The cause is in themselues, because they want faith. For if we had faith, we could want nothing. For faith feareth no famine, as saith an ancient Father. Another saith: For as much as all things are Gods, he that hath God, can want nothing, if himselfe be not wanting vnto God. Therefore to haue God, is to haue all things: for if we haue him our friend, we haue enough, we neede goe no further. For he will make men our friends: yea, he will make Angels, & all creatures to be seruiceable vnto vs, he Hiero. a Heliodorum. Cyprian in oratione dominica.

will give them specialll charge to loke to vs, to guard vs, and to do continuall homage vnto vs. Therefore let vs make GOD our friend, and then haue we done all at once, that may concerne our good, both for this life and a better. But if he stand not our friend, if wée haue not him on our side, if he backe vs not, then all other things whatsoeuer, can do vs no good: all is not worth a button. For, *Quid prodest si omnia habes, cum tamen, qui omnia dedit, non habere?* What is a man the better, though hee haue all things, and be without him which is the author of all things?

ugust.

Phil. Herein you speake very truely, no doubt. For we see many haue great plenty of outward things: but because they haue not God, they can haue no true comfort in them, or blessings with them.

Theol. True indeede: For, Man liueth not by bread onely (saith our Lord Iesus) but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. And againe he saith: Though a man haue abundance, yet his life consisteth not in the things that hee hath. For without Gods blessing, there can be no sound comfort in any thing. Wee sée by daily experience, how the Lord curseth the wicked, though they haue abundance. For some hauing abundance, yet are visited with continuall sicknesses: Some hauing abun-

Matth. 4.

Luk. 12.

abundance, pine away with consumptions. Others hauing abundance, dye of surfeiting. Others are snatched away by vntimely death, in the midst of all their iollity. Others are visited with great losse both by sea and by land. Others are vexed with cruell wiues, and disobedient children. Some again commit murthers, and treasons, and so lose all at once. Others are wasted and consumed by the secret curse of God, no man knoweth how. Some, hauing great riches, are giuen ouer to the murtherer, some to the théefe, some to the poysoner. Therefore the wise King saith: There is an euill sicknesse vnder the Sunne: riches reserued to the owners thereof, for their euill, *Eccles.* 5.12.

Zophar also the Naamathite saith: When the wicked shall haue sufficient and enough, he shall be brought into straits: The hand of euery troublesome man shall be vpon him. When he should fill his belly, God will send vpon him his fierce wrath; which he shall raine vpon him in stead of his meat. Iob 20.22

Thus then it is cléere, that mans life and good estate, dependeth not vpon the abundance of outward things, but onely vpon the blessing and prouidence of God. For, His blessing onely maketh rich, and it doth bring no sorrow with it. For, better is a little to the iust, than great abundance to many of the wicked. Better Pro.10.22 Psa.37.16.

Pro.25. 6. ter is a little with the feare of the Lord, than
Pro.16.8 great treasure, and trouble therewith. Better is a little with righteousnes, than great reuenues without equitie.

Thus then I conclude this point: Man liueth not by bread, but by a blessing vpon bread: not by outward meanes, but by a blessing vpon meanes. For how can bread, being a dead thing, and hauing no life in it selfe, giue life to others?

Phil. I doe not well vnderstand the meaning of these words: By euery word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Theol. Thereby is meant, the decree, ordinance, and prouidence of God, which vpholdeth all things, euen the whole order of nature.

Psal.33.9. For the Scripture saith: He spake, and it was done: he commanded, and they were created. In which words we plainely see, that God doth but speake, and it is done; he doth command, and all creatures are preserued. For God doth all things with a word. He created all with his word: he preserueth all with his word: he speaketh and it is done. His words are words of power and authority. Whatsoeuer he saith, whatsoeuer he calleth for, it must be done presently, without any delay: there is no withstanding of him. He calleth for famine, and behold famine. He calleth for plenty, and behold plenty. He cal-

leth

leth for pestilence, and behold pestilence. He calleth for the sword, and behold the sword. All Angels, all men, all beasts, all fishes, all foules, all creatures whatsoever must obey him, and be at his beck. He is the greatest commander: his word commandeth heauen and earth, and the sea. All creatures must be obedient to his will, and subiect to his ordinance.

This is the cause, why all things, both in heauen, earth, and the sea, do keepe their immutable and vnuariable courses, times and seasons, euen because he hath charged them so to do. And they must of necessity alwayes, at all times, and forever, obey; for the creatures must obey the Creator. This act of Parliament was made the first weeke of the World, and neuer since was or can be repealed.

Phil. But to call you backe againe to the point we had in hand: resolue me, I pray you, of this; whether many of the deare children of God doe not, in this life, sometimes want outward things, and are brought into great distresse.

Theol. Yes certainely. For Eliah did want, and was in distresse. Paul did want, and was in many distresses. The holy Christians, mentioned in the Hebrewes, did want, and were in marueilous distresses. Many of Gods deare ones hath in all ages wanted, and at this day also doe

K in.17.
2. Cor.1.8
2. Cor.11.
25.
Heb.11.
36.

want.

want, and are greatly distressed. But this is a most infallible truth, that howsoeuer Gods children may want, and be low brought, yet they are neuer vtterly forsaken, but are helpen euen in greatest extremities: yea, when all things are desperate, and brought euen to the last cast.

1.Cor.4.8 To this point, most notably speaketh the Apostle, saying: We are afflicted on euery side, but yet we despaire not: we are persecuted, but not forsaken; cast downe, but wee perish not.

Lam.3. The Prophet Ieremy also saith: The Lord will not forsake for euer: but though he send affliction, yet will he haue compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies: For he doth not punish willingly, or from his heart, nor afflict the children of men. The Kingly Prophet

Psal.94.4. saith: Surely the Lord will not faile his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance. The

Esay 55.8 Lord himselfe saith: For a moment in mine anger I hid my face from thee: but with euerlasting mercy haue I had compassion on thee. So then we may fully assure our selues, and euen write of it (as a most vndoubted and sealed truth) that Gods children shall neuer bee vtterly forsaken in their troubles.

Phil. Sith the care and prouidence of God is so great for his children, as you haue largely declared: what then I pray you is the cause why God suffereth his to bee brought into so many troubles

troubles and necessities?

Theol. Their profit and benefit is the cause, and not their hurt. For he loueth them, when he smiteth them. He fauoureth them, when he seemeth to be most against them. He aimeth at their good, when he seemeth to bee most angry with them. He woundeth them, that he may heale them. He pressetb them, that he may ease them. He maketh them cry, that afterward they may laugh. He alwayes meaneth well vnto them, he neuer meaneth hurt. He is most constant in his loue towards them. If he bring them into necessities, it is but for the triall of their faith, loue, patience, and diligence in prayer.

If he cast them into the fire, it is not to consume them, but to purge and refine them. If he bring them into great dangers, it is but to make them call vpon him more earnestly for helpe and deliuerance.

He pressetb vs that we might cry: we cry, that we may be heard: we are heard, that we might bee deliuered. So that here is no hurt done: we are worse scared than hurt.

Euen as a mother, when her child is froward, threatneth to throw it to the wolfe, or scareth it with some poker, or bul-begget, to make it cling more vnto her, and be quiet: So the Lord oftentimes sheweth vs the terrible

faces

faces of troubles and dangers, to make vs
cleaue and cling faster vnto him; and also to
teach vs to esteeme better of his gifts when we
enioy them, and to be more thankfull for them;
as health, wealth, peace, liberty, safety, &c. So
then still we see, here is nothing meant on Gods
Rom.8. part but good; as it is written: All things
worke together for good to them that loue
God. For, euen the afflictions of Gods children
are so sanctified vnto them by the Spirit, that
Heb.12. thereby they are made partakers of the holinesse
10. of God. Thereby they enioy the quiet fruit of
Heb.12. righteousnesse. Thereby they attaine vnto a
14. greater measure of ioy in the Holy Ghost.
1.Thes.1. Thereby the world is crucified to them, and they
6. to the world. Thereby they are made conforme-
Gal 6.14. able to the death of Christ. Thereby they are
Phil.3.10. kept from the condemnation of the World.
1.Cor.11. Thereby they learne experience, patience,
32. hope, &c. So that all things considered, Gods
Rom.5.3, 4. children are no losers by their afflictions, but
gainers. It is better for them to haue them,
than to be without them: they are very good
for them. For when Gods children are chasti-
sed, it is as it should be. For to them the crosse
is mercy, and losse is gaine. Afflictions are
their schooling, and their aduersity their best Vni-
uersity.

Psal.118. It is good for me (saith the holy man of God)
27. that

that I haue beene afflicted, that I might learne thy Statutes. By his afflictions therefore, he learned much, and became a good scholler in Gods booke, and well seene in his Statutes and Lawes. He grew to great wisedome and iudgement by his chastisements. All things turned about, in Gods mercifull prouidence, to his euerlasting comfort. For I say againe, and againe, That all things tend to the good of Gods chosen people. And therefore that estate, which GOD will haue his children to bee in, is alwayes best for them: because hee who can best discerne what is best, seeth it to be best for them; whether it be sicknesse or health; poverty or plenty; prison or liberty; prosperity or aduersity. For sometimes sicknesse is better for vs than health; and poverty than plenty. Are therefore the Children of GOD sicke? It is best for them. Are they poore? It is best for them. Are they in any trouble? It is best for them: because their good Father will turne it to the best. He will oftentimes cut vs short of our lusts, and desires, because hee seeth wee will hurte our selues with them. He, in fatherly care, will take the knife from vs, because hee seeth wee will hurt our selues with it. He will keepe vs short of health, and wealth, because he knoweth wee will bee the worse for them.

Yee will not give vs too much ease and prosperity in this world: for he knoweth it will poison vs. He will not allow vs continuall rest, like standing ponds: for then he knoweth we will gather scum and filth. He dealeth fatherly and mercifully with vs in all things; even then sucking our greatest good, when we thinke he doth vs most harme.

And to speake all in a word: he bringeth vs into troubles and straits, to this end especially, that he may heare of vs. For he right well knoweth our nature, he is well acquainted with our disposition. He knoweth we will not come at him, but when we stand in neede of him: wee care not for him, so long as all goeth well with vs. But if we come into distresse, or want any thing that we faine would haue, then he is sure to heare of vs: as he saith by the Prophet; In their affliction they will seeke me carely.

15. And another Prophet saith: Lord, in trouble haue they visited thee: They powred out a prayer when thy chastisement was vpon them. So then now, I hope, you doe plainely see the cause, why the Lord bringeth his children into sundry troubles and necessities.

Phil. I doe see it indeed, and am very well satisfied in it. But yet let me aske you one thing further. Are Gods children alwaies sure to be delivered out of their troubles?

Theol.

Theol. Yes verily: and (out of doubt) so far forth, as God saith good for them. For it is written: Great are the troubles of the righteous but the Lord deliuereth him out of them all. St. Peter saith: The Lord knoweth how to deliuer the godly out of temptation. As if he should say: He is beaten to it, and well seene and experienced in it, so as he can doe it easily, and without any trouble at all. It is said of Ioseph being in prison, that when his appointed time was come, and the counsell of the Lord had tryed him, the King sent and loosed him, the ruler of the people deliuered him. And againe the Scripture saith: The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth them, & deliuereth them out of all their troubles. The Angel of the Lord tarrieth round about them that feare him, and deliuereth them. And in another place, the Lord himselfe saith, concerning the righteous man: Because hee hath loued mee, therefore I will deliuer him. I will exalt him, because hee hath knowne my name. He shall call vpon mee in trouble, and I will heare him. I will be with him in trouble: I will deliuer him, and glorifie him. So also saith Eliphas the Temanite: He shal deliuer thee in six troubles, and in the seuenth, the euill shall not touch thee. Come my people, saith the Lord, enter thou into thy Chambers, and shut the doores after

Psal. 34. 19.
2 Pet. 1.
Psal. 105. 29, 30.
Psal. 34.
Psal. 91. 15.
Iob 5.
Esay 26. 20.

thee hide thy selfe for a very little while, vntill the indignation passe ouer. And the Prophet saith: Vpon Mount Sion shall bee deliuerance, and it shall be holy: and the house of Iacob shal possesse their hereditary possessions. Almost innumerable places of the Scriptures might be alledged to this purpose; but these may suffice. Therefore let vs know for a certainetie, that so sure as trouble and affliction are to the children of God: so sure also is deliuerance out of the same. As we may write of the one, and make reckoning of it, as sure as the coat on our backe: so may we also in Gods good time, write of the other, and make full account of it, as sure as the Lord is true. Abraham was in trouble, but deliuered. Iob in trouble, but deliuered. Dauid in great trouble, but deliuered. The three Children in the furnace, but deliuered. Daniel in the Lyons denne, but deliuered: Ionas in the Whales belly, but deliuered. Paul in innumerable troubles, but yet deliuered out of all.

Iob 17.

Phil. All this being true that you say, it followeth, that Gods children are chastised onely for their good, & euermore sure of deliuerance in his appointed time. Which thing being so; mee thinkes there is no cause at all why they should be ouer-heauy, or too much cast downe in their afflictions.

Theol.

Theol. Assuredly there is no cause at all, but rather cause why they should reioyce, clap their hands, and sing, Care away. For can a Father forsake his children? a King his Subiects? a Master his seruant? or a Shepheard his sheepe? Doth not Iehouah say: I will not leaue thee nor forsake thee? Doth not our heauenly Father know, wee haue néede of these things? Hath not GOD giuen vs his word, that wee shall not want outward things? Hath hée not said, they shall bée cast vpon vs? Why then should wée bée dismaied? Why should we hang downe our heads? Why doe wée not pluche vp our hearts, and bée of good cheare? GOD is our deare Father: hée is our best friend: he is our daily Benefactor: hée keepeth vs at his owne cost and charges: hée grudgeth vs nothing: hée thinketh nothing too much for vs: hée loueth vs most dearely: hée is most charie and tender ouer vs: hée cannot endure the wind should blow vpon vs: he will haue vs want nothing that is good for vs. If wée will eate gold, wée shall haue it. Hée hath giuen vs his faithfull promise, that as long as wee liue, wee shall neuer want. Let vs therefore reioyce and bée merry. For Heauen is ours, Earth is ours, GOD is ours, CHRIST is ours, All is ours. Heb. 13.

As the Apostle saith: All is yours, and you are 1 Cor. 12. 3.

are Christs, and Christ is Gods: The world clap their hands, and crow long before it bée day, saying, All is theirs: but the children of God may say, and say truly, All is ours. For they haue a true title and proper interest, through Christ, in all the Creatures. Many are their priuiledges, great are their prerogatiues. They are frée of heauen, and frée of earth. They are the only frée Denizens of the world: Christ hath purchased them their frédome: Christ hath made them frée, and therefore they are frée indéed. They are frée from sin, frée from hell, frée from damnation. They are at peace with God, Men and Angels. They are at peace with themselues. They are at peace with all Creatures. They are young Princes, Angels fellowes, descended of the highest house, of the blood royall of heauen, States of Paradise, and heires apparent to the immortall Crowne. Therefore God hath commanded his Angels to guard them, being such young Princes as they are: yea, hée hath giuen a very strait charge to all his Creatures, to loke to them, to sée to them, that they want nothing, that they take no hurt: so iealous, so chary, so tender is hée of them.

Gen. 32. The Angels must comfort Iacob. The Whale
2 King 17. must rescue Ionas. The Rauen must feed Elias.
Ion. 2. The Sunne and Moone must stay for Ioshua.
Ios. 10. The Sea must diuide it selfe, that Moses and

his

his people may passe thorow. The fire must not burne the three Children. The Lyons may not deuoure Daniel. All the creatures must change their nature, rather than Gods children should not be holpen and deliuered. Oh therefore how great is the happinesse of Gods chosen! Who can expresse it? Who can vtter it? They know not their owne happinesse: it is hid from them. Afflictions do cloud it: troubles do ouer-shadow it: crosses doe dim it: and there is an interposition of the earth, betwixt their sight and it. But this is most certaine, and sure, That the best is behinde with the Children of God: all the swæt is to come. Their happines doth not appeare in this world. Their life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ shall appear, then shall they also appeare with him in glorie. It doth not yet appeare what they shall bee: but when hee commeth, they shall bee made like vnto him. Their names are alreadie taken, and entred into the booke of life: and one day they shall be crowned. One day it shall bee said vnto them: Come yee blessed &c. One day they shall enioy his presence, where is fulnesse of ioy, and at whose right hand there is pleasure for euermore: Psalme 16. Therefore let all Gods secret ones reioyce, sing, and bee merry. For howsoeuer in this world they bee contemned, troden vnder the foote, made no bodies,

Exod. Dan. 3. & 6.

1 Iohn 21.

Col. 3. 3.

dies, and walke as shadowes; being counted as the very rags of the earth, and the abiects of the world: yet the time will come, when their happinesse and felicitie shall be such, as neuer entred into the heart of man; it is endlesse, vnspeakable, and vnconceiueable.

Phil. I doe now plainely see, that there is no cause why Gods people should be too heauy & dumpish in their afflictions. I see that though they bee not free from all afflictions, yet are they free from all hurtfull afflictions. For no rod, no crosse, no chastisement is hurtfull vnto them, but all in the conclusion, commeth to a blessed issue.

Theol. You haue vttered a great, and a most certaine truth. For there is no affliction or triall, which GOD imposeth vpon his Children, but if they endure it quietly, trust in his mercy firmely, and tarry his good pleasure obediently, it hath a blessed and a comfortable end. Therefore the people of God may well bee merry in the middest of their sorrowes. They may with patience and comfort submit themselues to their Fathers corrections, taking them patiently, and euen kissing his holy rod, and saying in themselues: With my Father will haue it so, I am content; seeing it is his minde, I am willing withall. As old Elie said: It is the Lord, let him doe what hee will. And as Dauid in like

1 Sam. 3. 18.

submission,

submission, said in a certaine case: Behold here am I: let him doe to me, as it seemeth good in his own eyes. And in another place he saith: I was dumbe, and opened not my mouth: because thou Lord hadst done it. Behold here then the patience of Gods Saints, and their humble submission vnto his most holy will. They know all shall end well, and that maketh them glad to thinke of it. I conclude then, that the Children of God are happy, in what state soeuer they are: happy in trouble, happy out of trouble, happy in pouerty, happy in plentie, blessed in sicknesse, blessed in health, blessed at home likewise, and abroad, and euery way blessed. But on the contrary, the wicked are cursed, in what state soeuer they are: cursed in sickenesse, cursed in health, cursed in plentie, cursed in pouertie, cursed in prosperitie, cursed in aduersitie, cursed in honour, cursed in dishonour. For all things worke together for their destruction. Nothing doth them any good. They are not any thing the better, either for Gods mercies or iudgements. All weathers are alike vnto them. They are alwaies the same, in prosperitie and in aduersitie: they are no changelings. And, as wee say, A good yeere doth not mend them; nor an ill yeere pare them.

2 Sam. 16.

Psal. 29.

Deut. 28.

Phil. You haue long insisted vpon this

point. Now proceede to the fourth signe of a mans damnation, which is the contempt of the Gospel: and lay open both the greatnesse of the sin, and the danger of it.

Theol. This sinne is of another nature than the former. It is a sinne against the first Table. It toucheth the person of God himselfe. For to contemne the Gospell, is to contemne God himselfe, whose Gospell it is. If to contemne the Ministers of the Gospell, bee to contemne God and Christ, as our Lord Iesus auoucheth (Luke 10.16.) how much more then, to contemne the Gospell it selfe? Therefore it is dangerous meddling with this sin. It is to meddle with edged toles, to meddle with Princes matters, to touch the Arke, to come neere the holy mountaine, which all were things full of great perill and danger. Yea, it is to spill the Sacrament. It is Noli me tangere. It is to raile at a King. It is to spet God in the face. It is high treason against the King of glorie. Therefore this sinne, of all other, can neuer bee endured, and may at no hand bee borne withall. For can a mortall King endure the contempt of his lawes? Can he put vp the contempt of his own person? Can hee abide any to spet at his Scepter, or to throw a stone at it? No surely, he will not.

Therefore the holy Ghost saith: He that despiseth

spiseth Moses lawes, dyeth without mercie, vnder two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment suppose yee shall hee bee worthie, which treadeth vnder foot the Sonne of God, and counteth the blood of the Testament as an vnholy thing (wherewith he was sanctified) and doth despite the Spirit of Grace? And againe: If they were punished which obeied not the word spoken by Angels; how shall wee escape, if we neglect so great saluation? If they escaped not, which refused him that spake on earth, how shall wee escape if we turne away from him that speaketh from heauen? Therefore our Sauiour Christ saith: That it shall bee easier for Sodom in the day of iudgement, than for the contemners of the Gospell.

Heb.10. 28.

Heb.2.5.

Heb.12.

Luke 10. 12.

Moreouer he saith: The Queene of the South shall rise vp in iudgement against all froward despisers of his word. For she came from the vttermost parts of the earth, to heare the wisedome of Salomon: and behold a greater than Salomon is here. For Christ is greater than Salomon; his doctrine and wisedome far more excellent. And therefore their sin is the greater which contemne it. They shall neuer be able to answer it. For the Spirit saith: Hee that despiseth the word shall be destroyed.

Mat.12.

Pro.13. 13.

St. Peter also telleth vs, that the old world, and men of the first age, are now in hell-fire, because

1 Pet.3.9.

cause they both despised, and were disobedient to
Pet.3.20 the doctrine of Christ, which (thoughnot personally, yet in his diuine spirit) he spake by Noah. So then we see cleerely, God will neuer take it at our hands, that his glorious Gospell should be so vniuersally and openly contemned as it is.

Phil. You haue spoken most truely, and also shewed it out of the Scriptures, that the contempt of the Gospel is a most hainous sinne: yet for all that, it is most lamentable to consider, how little men esteeme it, and how light they make of it. Many regard it no more than an egge-shell, they thinke it not worth a galley halfe penny: they will not goe to the doore to hear it; they take it to be a breath from vs, and a sound to them, & so the matter is ended. They esteeme it but as a noise, or empty sound in the ayre; or as a voice afar off, which a man vnderstandeth not: they neuer felt the power of it in their hearts. Therfore they prefer their Sheep, their Farmes, their Oxen, their Profits, their Pleasures, yea euery thing before it; they know it not to be any such precious Iewel, as it is. Although our Lord Iesus himselfe compare it to a hid treasure, and a most precious pearle; yet these filthy swine of the world tread it vnder feet: for they know not the price of it. Though
Pro.3. *Salomon* the wise saith, All the merchandise of gold and siluer, pearle and precious stones, are

not

net to be compared to it: yet these beasts, these dogs and hogs of the world, contemne it. They esteeme a Cow more than Christs most glorious Gospell. They are like *Esops* cocke, which made more account of a barley corne, than all the precious stones in the world: they are like little children, that esteeme their rattle, more than a bag of gold: they are like the Gadarens, which esteemed their Hogs, more than Christ and his Gospel: they make nothing of it: they thinke it not worth the while. Many of them sit idle in the streetes, euen vpon the Sabbaths: while the Gospel is preached in their Churches, many are at cardes and tables in Alehouses. Many on the Sabbaths sleep vpon their beds all the Sermon while in the afternoone. Many will heare a Sermon in the forenoone, and they take that to be as much as God can require at their hands, and that he is somwhat beholden to them for it; but as for the afternoon, they will heare none: then they will to bowles or tables. These men serue God in the forenoone, and the diuell in the afternoone; some run after whores and harlots on the Sabbaths; some run to dancing and beare-batings, some sit vpon their stalls, some sit in their shops, some by the fire side, some sit idle in the streets, some goe to the stoole-ball, and others looke on. O miserable wretches! O cursed caitiffes!

O monstrous hell-hounds, which so grosly and openly contemne the Gospell of Christ! What wil become of them in the end? Assuredly, their damnation sleepeth not. A thousand deaths wait for them: they lie open on all sides to the wrath of God. And we may wonder at his maruellous patience, that he doth not throw down balles of wilde-fire from heauen, to consume and burne vp both them, their shops and houses, & euen make them spectacles of his vengeance, for so notorious contempt of such sacred, holy, and high things.

Theol. You haue spoken very truely, zealously and religiously; and I doe greatly commend you for it. And I must needes affirme the same things, for they cannot be denied. And for mine own part, I thinke the Gospell was neuer so openly contemned in any age (of a people liuing vnder the profession of it, and vnder a godly and Christian Prince) as it is in this age. For howsoeuer some make a shew of religion, yet they haue denied the power thereof. They turne the grace of God into wantonnesse, as S. Iude saith, ver. 4. They make the Gospell a cloake for their sins. They receiue it, & embrace it, as it will best stand with their profits and pleasures, their lusts and likings, their credits and policies, and not a iot further. They will practice it at their leasure. These men professe they know God: but by their

their works they deny him,& are abominable, disobedient, & to euery good work reprobate.

This age is full of such carnall Protestants.

Phil. This age indeed aboundeth with many hollow-hearted hypocrites, dissemblers and time-seruers; which howsoeuer they make a face and bear a countenance as though they loued the Gospell, yet their heart is not with it. Their heart is with Atheism, their heart is with Popery; They haue a Pope in their belly: they be Church-papists. Howsoeuer now and then, they come to the Church, and hear a Sermon, and shew a good countenance to the Preacher, yet their heart goeth after couetousnesse. The Lord complaineth of this, by the Prophet Ezechiel, saying: This people will sit before thee, & heare thy words: but they will not do them. For with their mouths they make iests: & their heart goes after couetousnes. God complaineth of this also by the Prophet Ieremy, saying, Will you steale, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsly, and stand before me in this house wherupon my name is called, & say, we are deliuered, though we haue done all these abominations? Is this house become a den of theeues, wherupon my name is calld? where we see how the Lord doth chide his people, & sharply reproue them for abusing of his temple, worship, & sacrifices, making them a cloak for their sins:

Tit. 1. 10.

Ezech 33. 31.

Ier. 7. 5.

and

and making his house a den of theeues, which should be an assembly of Saints. Now all this is a liuely description of our time: wherein many vse the exercises of the word, prayer, & sacraments, not to kill & mortifie sin, but to nourish and shelter their sins. For they blindly imagin, that if they come to the Church and pray, and heare the Sermon, they are discharged of their sins, though they leaue them not. They imagine they haue giuen God his ful due; and that therfore they may be the more bold to sinne afterward. These kind of Hypocrits are like rogues; which vse medicines, not to cure sores, but to make sores. These are like the Papists, which think if they heare Masse in the morning, they may doe what they list all the day after.

Theol. I see now, you haue very well profited in the knowledge of God & true Religion. You haue spoken soundly, and like a man of knowledge in Gods matters. For the common sort of people thinke indeed, that all Religion consisteth in the outward seruice of God, though their hearts bee farre from him. To whom God may iustly say: This people draweth neare me with their lips, but their harts are far from me. Mat. 15. 8. Of whom also God may iustly take vp all his iust complaints of his people Israel and Iudah, which are so frequent in all the Prophets: to wit, That hee did abhorre their sacrifices, loath

their

their oblations, detest their incense, despise their new Moones, disdaine their rams, lambes, and goats; accounting them all but as mans blood, dogs blood, swines blood; and all because their hands were full of blood; because they executed not iustice & iudgement in the gate; because they were not obedient to his will, because their harts were not with him; because they vsed, or rather abused all these things as shelters for their sins. Iob 66.3.

Phil. The great contempt of the Ministers of the Gospel in this age, doth strongly argue the contempt of the Gospel it selfe. For a man cannot loue the Gospel, and hate the faithfull Ministers thereof. But wee see by lamentable experience, that the most graue, godly, & learned Ministers, are had in derision of very base and vile persons. And as *Iob* saith: They whose fathers I haue refused to set with the dogs of my flockes, they were the children of fooles, and the children of villaines, which were more vile than the earth. For now euery rascal dares scoffe and scorne at the most graue and ancient Fathers and Pastors of the Church, dares flout them as they walke in the streetes, and as they ride by the high wayes. And though the holy Ghost giueth them glorious and lofty titles (as the stewards of Gods own house, disposers of his secrets, disbursers of his treasure, keepers of the broad seale, keepers of the keies of heauen, Iob 30.1. Tit.1.7. 1 Cor.4.1. Mat.16. 19. 2 Cor.5. 20. Apoc.3.7. 24. 2 Cor.8.1.

Gods

Gods Secretaries, Gods Embassadors, Angels; yea the very glory of Christ: and all this, to expresse the excellency of their calling) yet these vile varlets, & venemous vermine of the earth, dare call them proud Prelates, pild Parsons, pelting Priests. O monstrous and intolerable impiety! Now it is come to passe, that this most sacred function (which is glorious in the sight of God and his Angels, and in it selfe most honourable) is had in greatest contempt of all callings. For now the earth is full of ranke Atheists, and mocke-Gods: which scoffe at the Gospel, and bleare out their tongues at all Religion. These kind of fellows neuer dissemble for the matter, they make no shew at al, they are no hypocrits, they hide not their sins, but declare them openly like Sodom. They care not if they neuer come to the Church; they are too full of it. They liue like brute beasts. They thinke the Scriptures are but fables. They raile at the Ministers and Preachers. They make flat opposition against them, & are notorious mockers & past-graces.

Theol. Of such the Apostle S. Peter foretold, that in the last dayes should come mockers, & such as would liue after their owne lusts, &c.

Of such a godly Writer saith: *Verbum Dei securè contemnitur, promissiones inanes esse creduntur, minæ pro fabulis habentur.* That is, the word of God is carelesly contemned, his promises are counted

counted vaine, and his threatnings fables. Of such the Poet saith:

Heu! viuunt homines tanquam mors nulla sequatur:
Aut velut infernus fabula vana foret.

Alas! men liue as they should neuer die:
Or as though speech of hell were a starke lie.

Now is also the time, wherein the world swarmeth with Papists and Atheists: and most men liue as if there were no God. For now religion is hated, true godlinesse despised, zeale abhorred, sinceritie scoffed at, vprightnesse loathed, Preachers contemned, Professors disdained, and almost all good men had in derision. For now wée may iustly complaine with the Prophet: Iudgement is turned backward, and iustice standeth a farre off. Truth is fallen in the streets, and equitie cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth, & he that refraineth from euill, maketh himselfe a prey. The Prophet Micah bewaileth the times, saying: The good man is perished out of the earth, and there is none righteous among men. They all lye in waite for bloud: euery man hunteth his neighbour with a net. The Prophet Ieremie complaineth of the same euill in his time; namely, that the people were come to be past shame in sinning: Were they ashamed (saith he) when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not ashamed, neyther could they haue any shame. This is a

Esa. 59.

Mich. 7.

Ier. 8. 12.

linely picture, and a very counterpane of our time: for now we haue put on a brow of brasse; we are become impudent in sinne. Wee cannot blush, we cannot be ashamed. Wee are almost past shame and past grace. O Lord what will this geere grow to in the end!

Phil. We may iustly feare some great iudgment of God to be neare vnto vs: yea, euen to hang ouer our heads. For the Lord will neuer leaue the contempt of his Gospel and his Ministery vnpunished.

Theol. You haue spoken a truth. And wee haue heard before how the old world was plagued for it. And wee reade how grieuously the Iewes were afflicted by the Romanes for this sin: as our Lord Iesus did plainly foretell. We read also, that after the Lord had broached the Gospel himselfe, and spread it abroad by his Apostles, conquering the world thereby (which thing was signified by the white horse, his rider, his bow, and his crowne) and yet shortly after, saw that the same began to bee contemned in the world, and made light of; then he did in most fearefull manner plague the earth with warres, blood-sheddings, tumults, dearth, famine, and pestilence: which are all signified by the red horse, the blacke horse, and the pale horse, which did appeare at the opening of the second, third, and fourth seale. So likewise vndoubtedly,

Apoc. 6. 2.

ly, GOD will sewerely punish all injuries, wrongs and contempts done to his faithfull Embassadors; as appeareth Apoc. 11. 5. where it is set downe, That if any would hurt the two witnesses with their two olives, and two candlesticks, (whereby is signified the faithfull Preachers of the Gospell, with all their spiritualll treasures and heavenly light) fire should proceed out of their mouthes, and devoure their adversaries; that is, the fire of Gods wrath should consume all that had oppressed them, eyther by mockes, scorns, railings, slanders, imprisonment, or any other kinde of indignity. Of this we have a plaine example or two in the Scripture. First we read how fire came down from Heaven, and consumed the contemptuous Captaine and his fifty, at the threatning and calling for of Elijah. Secondly, how two Beares came out of the forrest, and tare in pieces the forty youthers that mocked Elisha, the Prophet of God, calling him bald-head, bald-pate. So then by these examples it is manifest, that howsoever the Lord may winke at these things for a time, and make as though he saw them not, yet the time will come, when he will raine fire and brimstone upon all the scoffers of his faithfull Ministers, and contemners of his Gospel. All this is plainly declared in the sixt chapter of the Proverbs of Salomon; where

1 King 1. 10.

2 King 1. 23.

is shewed how the wisedome of God, euen Iesus Christ the highest wisedome, doth cry aloud all abroade in the world, and manifest himselfe in the open streets; but yet is contemned of wicked worldlings, and scoffing sotes. Therefore saith Christ, Because I haue called, & ye refused, I haue stretched out my hand, but none would regard: ye haue hated knowledge, and despised all my counsell; therefore I wil laugh at your destruction, & mocke when your feare commeth vpon you, like a sudden desolation, & your destruction, like a whirle-wind. Then shall they call vpon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find mee. Here then wée see his terrible wrath and vengeance, threatned from heaven, against all prophane contemners of Christ, and his euerlasting Gospell, or any of the faithfull publishers and proclaimers thereof. Behold therefore, yée despisers, and wonder: consider well what will become of you in the end. Do not thinke, that the most iust God will alwaies put it vp at your hands, that yée should so manifestly contemne both his Word and the most zealous Preachers and Professors thereof? No, no: assure your selues, hée will hée euen with you at last. Hée will smite you both sideling and ouerthwart: hée will dogge you and pursue you with his iudgements, and neuer leaue following the

Pro. 1. 24.

chase

chase with you till he haue destroyed you, and consumed you from off the face of the earth. For remember, I pray you, what he saith in Deuteronomie: If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold of iudgement, I will execute vengeance on mine enemies, and I will reward them that hate me: I will make mine arrowes drunke with blood, and my sword shall eate the flesh of mine aduersaries. Deut. 32. 41, 42.

Phil. Truely Sir, wee may iustly feare, that for our great contempt of the Gospel, and generall coldnesse, both in the profession and practice thereof, God will take it from vs, & giue it to a people that will bring foorth the fruite thereof.

Theol. We may well feare indeede, lest for our sins, especially our loathing of the heauenly Manna, the Lord remoue our candlestick, take away our siluer trumpets, let vs no more heare the sweet bels of Aaron, cause all vision to faile, & our Sabbaths to cease, and bring vpon vs that most grieuous and sore famine of not hearing the word of the Lord, spoken of by Amos the Prophet. Then shall our Halcion dayes and golden yeeres, be turned into weeping, mourning and lamentation. God for his infinite mercy sake turne it away from vs. Amos 8.

Phil. Amen, Amen: and let vs all pray earnestly night and day, that those fearfull iudge-

ments may according to Gods infinite mercie bee held backe, which our sins doe continually cry for: and that his most glorious Gospel may be continued to vs and our posteritie, euen yet with greater successe.

Asm. No doubt it is a very great sinne to despise the word of God: and I think there is none so bad that will doe it. For we ought to loue Gods word: God forbid else. Hee that loueth not Gods word, it is pitty he liueth.

Theol. These are but words of course: It is an easie matter to speake good words. And very many will say as you say: but both you and they, in your practice, doe plainly shew, that you make no reckoning of it: you esteeme it no more than a dish-clout. I thinke, if the matter were well tryed, you haue scant a Bible in your house. But though you haue one, it is manifest that you seldome reade therein, with any care or conscience, and as seldome heare the Word preached. How else could you be so ignorant as you are?

Asm. I grant that I and some others are somwhat negligent in the hearing and reading of the word of God: but you cannot say therefore we do contemne it.

Theol. Yes verily. Your continuall negligence and carelessnesse doth argue a plaine contempt. Sure it is, you haue no appetite nor stomack

stomacke to the holy word of God. You had rather doe any thing, than eyther read or meditate on it: it is irksome vnto you: you reade not two chapters in a week. All holy exercises of religion are most bitter and tedious vnto you: they are as vinegar to your teeth, and smoke to your eies. The immoderate loue of this world, and of vanitie, hath tok away your appetite from all heauenly things. And whereas you shift it off with negligence, as though that would excuse you; the Apostle hits you home, when he saith, Heb. 2. 3. How shall we escape if we neglect so great saluation? Marke that he saith, If we neglect.

Theol. Belike you thinke men haue nothing else to doe, but reade the Scriptures, and heare Sermons.

Theol. I do not say so: I do not say you should doe nothing else. For God doth allow you, with a good conscience, and in his feare, to follow the workes of your calling, as hath beene said before. But this I condemne in you and many others, that you will giue no time to priuate praiers, reading and meditation in Gods word; neither morning nor euening; neyther before your business, nor after. And although you haue often vacant time enough, yet you will rather bestow it in vanitie, and idle prating, and gossipping, than in any good exercise of Religion. Which doth plainely shew, that you neither

ther delight in holy things, neither is there any true feare of God before your eyes.

Anti. I tell you plainely, wee must tend our businesse, we may go beg else: wee cannot liue by the Scriptures. If wee follow Sermons, we shall neuer thriue. What, doe you think euery man is bound to read the Scriptures? Haue we not our fiue wits? Doe we not know what we haue to doe? you would make fooles of vs belike. But we are neither drunk nor mad.

Theol. That euery man (of what condition soeuer) is bound in conscience to heare and reade the Word of God, hath been shewed, and proued in the beginning of our conference: but as for your fiue wits, they will not serue your turne in these matters, though you had fifteene wits. For all the wit, reason, and vnderstanding of naturall men, in Gods matters, is but blindnesse and meere foolishnesse. The Apostle saith, That the wisedome of the most wise in this world, is not onely foolishnesse with God, but indeede very enmity against God. And againe he saith, That the naturall man (with all his fiue wits) vnderstandeth not the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. Most prudently to this point speaketh Elihu, saying: There is a spirit in man; but the inspiration of the Almighty giueth vnderstanding.

1 Cor. 3. 19.
Rom. 8. 7.
1 Cor. 2. 14.
Iob 32. 2.

Anti.

Antil. I vnderstand not these Scriptures which you doe alledge: they doe not sink into my head.

Theol. I think so indeed: For the holy Ghost saith: Wisedome is too high for a foole. Pro. 24.

Antil. What? do you call me foole? I am no more foole than your selfe.

Theol. I call you not fole: but I tell you what the Scripture saith; which calleth all men (though otherwise neuer so wise, politicke, and learned) very foles, till they bee truly enlightned and inwardly sanctified by the Spirit of God: as appeareth, Tit. 3. 3. Where the Apostle affirmeth, that both Titus and himselfe, before they receiued the illuminating Spirit of Gods grace, were very foles, without wit, and without all sense in Gods matters.

Phil. I pray you good Master *Theologus*, let him alone; For he will neuer haue done cauilling. I see he is a notable cauiller. Let vs therefore proceede to speake of the fift signe of condemnation, which is swearing.

Theol. It may well indeed be called a signe of condemnation. For I think it more than a signe; it is indeede an euident demonstration of a Reprobate. For I neuer will any man truly fearing God in his heart, that was an vsuall and a common swearer.

Phil. I am flat of your mind for that. For it can

cannot be, that the true feare of God and ordinary swearing should dwell together in one man; sith swearing is a thing forbidden by flat statute: And God addeth a sore threat to his Law, That he will not hold him guiltlesse that takes his name in vaine; but will most sharply and seuerely punish that man.

Theol. You say true. And God saith moreouer, that if we do not fear and dread his glorious and fearefull Name Iehouah, hee will make our plagues wonderfull, Deut. 28.53. Hee saith also by his Prophet Malachie, cap. 3. v. 5. that he will be as a swift witnesse against swearers. The Prophet Zachary saith, cap. 5. v. 24. that ẏ flying book of Gods curse & vengeance shall enter into the house of the swearer, and he shall bee cut off.

Therefore let all swearers take heed, and looke to themselues in time: for wee see there is a rod in pickle, laid vp in store for them.

Phil. These threatnings beeing so great and grieuous, & that from the God of heauen himselfe, a man would thinke, should cause mens hearts to quake and tremble, and make them affraid to rap out such oaths as they do; if they were not altogether hardned, past feeling, and past grace.

Theol. True indeed. But yet we see by lamentable experience, how men are giuen ouer vnto swearing and forswearing. For at this day

there

there is no sinne more common amongst vs than swearing: for, many there bee, which cannot speake tenne words, but one shall bee an oath. And numbers haue got such a wicked custome of swearing, that they can by no meanes leaue it; no more than a Black-more can change his skinne, or a Leopard his spots: For it is made naturall vnto them through custome, and they haue got the habit of it. I doe verily thinke, if it were high treason to sweare, yet some could not leaue swearing. And sure I am (as light as we make of it) that it is high treason against the Crowne of heauen: yea, it is a sinne immediately against God, euen against his owne person: and therefore he hath forbidden it in the first Table of his Law.

Phil. Questionlesse this vice of swearing is, of all other sinnes, most rife in this Land. For you shall haue little boyes and children in the streets rappe out oathes in most fearefull manner. It would make a mans heart quake to heare them. Wee may thinke, they haue sucked them out of their mothers breasts: but sure wee are, they haue learned them from the euill example of their parents. And now adaies we cannot almost talke with a man, but (in ordinary speech) hee will belch out one oath or another.

Theol.

Theol. I will tell you a strange thing, and with great griefe I speake it: I do verily think there are sworn in this land an hundred thousand oathes euery day in the yeare.

Phil. No doubt Sir, you are within compasse. For now almost so many men, so many oathes; excepting some few in comparison. Nay, I know diuers, of mine owne experience, which if they may be kept in talke, will sweare euery day in the yeare an hundred oaths for their parts.

Theol, O what a lamentable thing is it! wee may well take vp the old complaint of the Prophet Ieremie, who saith, that in his time, The Land did mourne, because of oathes. And wee may well wonder, that the Land sinketh not because of oathes. For if God were not a God of infinite patience, how could hee endure his most sacred and glorious name to bee so many thousand times blasphemed in one day, and that by such miserable wretches as we be!

r. 23. 20.

Phil. Wee may indeed admire and wonder at the patience and long suffering of God, that he spareth vs so long, and giueth vs so large a time of Repentance. But sure it is, that the Prophet saith: That howsoeuer the Lord is slow to anger, yet hee is great in power, and will not surely cleare the wicked. Though hee may winke at their monstrous oathes for a time,

Iah. 1. 3.

time, yet he forgetteth them neuer a whit, but scoreth them vp, & registreth them in his book of accounts: so as they stand in record against them. And when the great day of reckoning shall come, he will set them all in order before them, and lay them to their charge.

Let not the wicked swearers & blasphemers therfore think that they shal alwaies scape scot-free, because God letteth them alone a while, & deferreth their punishment. For the longer God deferreth, the more terrible wil his stroks be when they come. The longer an arrow is held in the bow, the stronger will bee the shot when it commeth forth. Though God haue leaden feete, and commeth slowly to execute wrath, yet hath he an iron hand, and will strike deadly when he commeth. Though God giueth the wicked security for a time (saith *Iob*) Iob 24.
yet his eies are fixed vpon all their waies. And Iob 21.
in another place he saith: The wicked are reserued vnto the day of destruction, and they shall be brought forth vnto the day of wrath. So then, the holy man *Iob* plainely affirmeth, that the state and condition of all the rich and wealthy worldlings, is as the condition of an Oxe, that is fatted vp against the day of slaughter. For in the same Chapter hee saith: They spend their dayes in wealth, and suddenly goe Iob 21.
downe to hell. But now, I pray you, nominate the

the oathes which are so rife and common amongst vs.

Theol. There bee fire oathes which are (of all other) most rife and common in euery mans mouth; and they be these:

By my faith.
By my troth.
By our Lady.
By St. Marie.
By God.
As God shall iudge me.

For you cannot lightly talke with a man, but hee will flush out some of these in his ordinarie speech.

Asin. Doe you count it so great a matter, for a man to sweare by his faith, or his troth?

Theol. Yes iuerie doe I. For our faith and our troth are the most precious Iewels we haue. Shall we then lay them to gage for euery word we speake? it sheweth we are of small credit; nay, very bankrupts. For who but a bankrupt will lay the best Iewel in his house to pledge for euery small trifle?

Asin. I know a man that will neuer sweare but by Cock, or Py, or Mouse-foot, I hope you will not say these be oathes. For he is as honest a man as euer brake bread. You shall not heare an oath come out of his mouth.

Theol.

Theol. I do not think he is so honest a man as you make him. For it is no small sin to sweare by creatures. The Lord saith by his Prophet Ieremie, cap. 5. vers. 7. They haue forsaken me, and sworne by them that are no Gods. So then to swear by Creatures, is to forsake God: and I trow you will not say, he is an honest man which forsaketh God.

Asm. I doe not beleeue, that to sweare by small things is a forsaking of God.

Theol. Nay, and such as you are, will beleeue no more of the Word of God, than will stand with your fantasie. But whatsoever you beleeue, or beleeue not, the Word of God standeth sure: and no iot of it shall euer be proued false. But this I will say vnto you, because you thinke it so small a matter to sweare by Creatures, That the more vile and base the thing is which you sweare by, the greater is the oath; because you ascribe that vnto a base creature, which is only proper to God: namely, to know our hearts, and be a discerner of secret things. For whatsoever a man sweareth by, he calleth it as a witnesse vnto his conscience, that hee speaketh the truth, and lyeth not: which thing onely belongeth vnto GOD. And therefore in swearing by creatures, we doe robbe God of his honour. Therefore to sweare by the crosse of the money, or by bread, or by mouse-foote, or

the

the fire, which they call Gods Angell, or any such like, is a robbing of God of his honour, and an ascribing of that to the creature, which is proper only to the Creator.

Asun. What say you then to them that swear by the Masse, and by the Rood?

Theol. Their sinne is as great as the other: For it is an hainous thing to sweare by Idols, as St. Marie, our Ladie, by the Masse, by the Rood, &c. The Prophet Amos saith: They that sweare by the sinne of Samaria; and that say, Thy God, O Dan, liueth: euen they shall fall, and neuer rise vp againe. To sweare by the sin of Samaria, is to sweare by idols: for Samaria was full of idols.

Amos 8.4

Moreover, the Lord threatneth by the Prophet Zephanie, That hee will put off them that sweare by the Lord, and by Malcham, or by their King. For the idolaters called their idoll Moleth, their King.

Zeph. 1. 5.

Asun. Seeing you condemne both swearing by creatures, and swearing by idols; what then must we sweare by? You would haue vs swear by nothing belike.

Theol. In our ordinary communication wee must not swear at all, either by one thing or another: but (as our Lord teacheth vs) our communication must bee Yea, yea: Nay, nay: For whatsoeuer is more than these, cõmeth of euill.

Mat. 5. 37.

And

And S. Iames saith, cap. 5. 22. Before all things, my Brethren, sweare not: neither by heauen, nor by earth, nor by any other oath: but let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay Nay, lest you fal into condemnation.

Antil. It seemeth you are an Anabaptist. You condemne all swearing, you will haue no swearing at all.

Theol. Not so, for though I condemne swearing by creatures, swearing by idols, and vaine swearing: yet I doe allow of swearing before a Magistrate, and priuately also, in matters of weight and importance, for the further bolting out of the truth.

This is warranted from Gods owne mouth, where he saith: Thou shalt sweare, The Lord liueth in truth, in iudgement, and in righteousnesse, Ier. 2. And in these cases only the name of God is to be sworn by: as it is written, Deut. 10. 20. Thou shalt feare the Lord thy God, & thou shalt serue him, and shalt cleaue vnto him, and shalt sweare by his name.

Asun. May wee not sweare by God in our common talke?

Theol. At no hand. For that is to take the name of God in vaine, which you know is forbidden.

And one of the wise Heathen could say thus: When an oath is layd vpon thee, vndertake it

Socr. ad Dem. for two causes: eyther to deliuer thy self from some grieuous crime and accusation, or else to preserue thy friends from danger. So then that Heathen man in commen talke, will not allow any oath, much lesse to sweare by God. Another Phocilid. saith: Auoyd an oath, though thou sweare truly. So then we sée vaine swearing condemned, euen by Heathen.

Asm. Yea, but for all that, we must swear; men will not beleeue vs else.

Phil. Neyther yet will they beléeue you any whit the more for your swearing. For it doth manifestly appeare, that thousands make no conscience at all of it. They make no more conscience of it, than of cracking of nuts: and therefore what wise man will beléeue them though they sweare neuer so much? But, if you would make conscience alwaies to speake the truth from your heart, without any oathes at all, you should be better beléeued of all honest and wise men, than otherwise with a thousand oathes.

Antil. It is the custome to sweare.

Theol. But a wicked and diuellish custome.

Antil. I hope Sir, wee may sweare, as long as we sweare truly, and sweare by nothing but that which is good.

Theol. It hath beene answered before, that in vaine matters you may not sweare at all.

Antil.

Antil. As long as we do no worse than that, I hope God will hold vs excused.

Theol. God will not hold you excused, when you breake his commandements, and continue so doing.

Antil. What say you then to them, that sweare wounds and bloud, and such like, in a brauerie, thinking that it setteth out their speech very well?

Theol. Hell gapeth for them: And they shall know one day what it is to blaspheme God.

Antil. What may wee thinke of such as sweare by Gods life, Gods soule, Gods bodie, Gods heart?

Theol. That their case is most woefull and dangerous; and I quake at the naming of them. They are most horrible, monstrous, and outragious blasphemies: enough to make the stones in the street to cracke, and the clouds to fall vpon our heads. And wee may thinke, that all the diuels in hell are in a readinesse, to carry such blasphemous villaines headlong into that lake, which burneth with fire and brimstone for euer.

Antil. Doe you find in Scriptures, that God will so seuerely punish swearers?

Theol. Yes verily. For besides that which hath beene spoken before, wee haue diuers other examples: First of Senacherib, the King of

Ashur, who for his outragious blasphemies against the God of heauen, was in most fearefull and tragicall manner slaine by his owne sonnes, Adramelech and Sharezer, & that in the Temple, when he was worshipping his Idoll God, Nisroch, 2 King. 19. 37. And yet behold a more fearefull example of Gods wrath against blasphemers.

We read, that an hundred thousand of the Aramites were slaine by the Israelites in one day for blaspheming God, 1 Kin. 20. 29. and seuen & twenty thousand being left, and flying into the city of Apheck for refuge, were all slain by the fall of an huge great wall. What should I here speak how the seuen sonnes of Saul the King of Israel were hanged vp before the Lord in mount Gibeah, for the breach of the oath made to the Gibeonites long before? 1 Sam. 21. In these examples we may plainely see, that the iust God, euen in this life, sometimes will be reuenged of blasphemers and oath-breakers. And therefore the very heathen in all ages haue been very carefull for the performing of oathes: as Pharaoh King of Egypt willed Ioseph to goe vp into the land of Canaan to bury his Father, according to his oath made to his Father.

Phil. Me thinketh these so terrible and fearfull examples of Gods vengeance against swearers & blasphemers, should strike some terror

into

into the hearts of our blasphemers.

Theol. One should thinke so indeede, if any thing could doe it. But alas they are so hardened in it, and in all other sinne, that nothing can moue them: except peradventure there were a Law made, that euery swearer and blasphemer should hold his hand a quarter of an houre in boiling lead. This, or some such like seuere law, might peradventure curbe them a little, and make them bite in their oaths. But otherwise they will neuer feare any thing, till they be in hell fire, when it will be too late to repent.

Phil. What may be the cause of this so often and great swearing? for surely it is no inherent and inbred sinne in our nature, as some of the other sinnes be.

Theol. No verily. But these three I iudge to be the cause of it.

Custome.
Want of admonition.
Want of punishment.

Phil. What then are the remedies of it?

Theol. The remedies are these:

Disuse.
Prayer.
Friendly admonition.
Some sharpe Law.

Phil. Well Sir, now we haue heard enough

of swearing, I pray you proceede to the next signe of damnation, which is lying.

Theol. Swearing and lying be of very nere kindred. For he that is a common swearer, is for the most part a common lyer also: For he that maketh no conscience of swearing, will make no conscience of lying. And as the Lord hateth the one, so also he hateth the other. And as he punisheth the one, so will he punish the other. Therefore Salomon saith, Pro. 12. 23. Lying lips are an abomination vnto the Lord. Saint Iohn saith, Apoc. 21. 15. Without shall bee dogges, enchanters, whoore-mongers, murtherers, and whosoever loueth or maketh lyes. Again the same holy man of God saith, that liers shall haue their part and portion in the lake which burneth with fire & brimstone, wch is the second death, Apoc. 21. 8.

Phil. These Scriptures which you alledge do manifestly declare that God abhorreth lyers, and hath reserued great torments for them. Therefore the Princely Prophet Dauid saith, that he would banish all lyers out of his house. He that telleth lyes (saith he) shall not remaine in my sight. A lying tongue is one of the fixe things which God doth hate, and his soule abhorre. Yet for all this, we see by lamentable experience, how many haue euen taught their tongues to lye (as the Prophet saith) and there is no truth in their lips. The vice is almost as

Psal. 101. 7

Pro. 6. 16, 17.

Ier. 9.

common

common as ſwearing. For it is hard to finde a man that will ſpeak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth from his heart, in ſimplicity and plainneſſe, at all times, in all places, and amongſt all perſons, without all glozing or diſſembling, either for feare, gaine, flattery, men-pleaſing, hiding of faults, or any ſiniſter reſpect whatſoeuer. Where, I ſay, is this man to bee found? I would faine ſee him, I would faine looke vpon ſuch a man: it would doe my heart good to behold him: I would reioyce to ſet mine eyes vpon ſuch a man.

Theol. Such a man as you ſpeak of, is hardly to be found among the ſonnes of men. They be blacke Swannes in the earth, they bee white Crowes, they be rare Birds. For there be very few that will ſpeake the truth from their heart: yet ſome ſuch I hope there be. But for the moſt part, and amongſt the greater ſort, lying, diſſembling, and fraud, doe beare all the ſway. There is no truth, no honeſty, no conſcience, no ſimplicitie, no plaine dealing amongſt men in theſe moſt corrupt times. Faith and truth are parted cleane away. And as the kingly Prophet ſaith, Pſal. 12. The faithful are failed from among the children of men. They ſpeak deceitfully euery one with his neighbour; flattering with their lippes, and ſpeaking with a double heart. Men now adayes ſtudie the art of lying, flatte-

ring, fawning, glosing and dissembling? they haue a heart, and a heart. They haue honey in their mouth, and gall in their heart. Their tongues are as soft as butter and oyle: but their hearts are full of bitternesse, poison and wormewood. They are full of outward courtesie and ciuilitie, full of Court-holy-water, when there is no truth nor plainnesse in their inward affection. They will speake you faire, when they would cut your throate. They will shew you a good countenance, when they would eate your heart with Garlicke. In outward shew they will carry themselues plausibly, when their hearts are full of venime and malice. This diperous brood doe but watch their times & opportunities, till they can get a man vpon the hip: and then they will sting him, and worke their malice vpon him. These fawning curs will not barke till they bite: they will lurke, and lye close, till they spy their vantage, and then they will shew themselues in their kinde: then they will hoist a man, and turne him ouer the perke, if they can. These men are like the waters, which are most deepe, when they are most calme: like a dangerous rocke, hid vnder a calme sea; or as the Heathens say, like the Syrens song, which is the Sailers wrack: like the Fowlers whistle, which is the birds death: like the hid bait, which is the fishes bane: like the Harpies

pies, which haue Virgins faces, and Vultures tallons; or like Hyena, which speaketh like a friend, and deuoureth like a foe; or as the Scripture saith, like Ioab, the Captaine of the hoast, which spake kindly to Amasa, another Captaine, and killed him, when presently he stabd him; or like vnto the Herodians and Pharisées seruants, which came to our Lord Iesus with many fawning insinuations, calling him good Master, and telling him that hee was the plaine truth, that he taught the way of God truely, he regarded no mans person, and many good morrowes, and all this geere, when as in very deede, their purpose was to entangle him in his wordes, and to entrap him, that they might catch aduantage against him, and so cut his throate, and giue him pap with a hatchet. This is it which the wise man saith: A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feete. And againe: As siluer-drosse ouer-laid vpon an earthen pot: so are fawning lips, and an euill heart. And in another place he saith: He that beareth hatred will counterfeit with his lips: but hee layeth vp deceit in his heart. When hee shall shew his voyce fauourably, trust him not. For there are seuen abominations in his heart: He will couer hatred by deceit: but his malice shall bee discouered in the congregation. In another place hee pronounceth a curse vpon

2 Sam. 20 10.

Pro. 29. 5.

Pro. 26. 23

Pro. 26. 24

on all these hollow-hearted hypocrits, and meal-mouthed flatterers. For saith he, Pro. 27. 14. Vnto him that blesseth his friend with a loud voyce, betimes in the morning, rising vp earely, a curse shall be imputed.

Phil. You haue very wel described the conditions of the men of this age, which haue faces, countenances & tongues, but no hearts; which professe lying and dissembling; which say hee cannot liue that cannot dissemble; which haue faire faces, and false hearts; which haue forgotten that plaine honestie is deep policie.

Theol. The holy Ghost, often in the Prouerbs of Salomon calleth all vnregenerate men fooles: or, as it is in the Hebrew, men without hearts. Because they haue no heart to God, no heart to his word, no heart to his children, no heart to godlinesse, no heart to any thing that good is. They are without an honest heart, an vpright heart, a plaine heart. They are all in words, nothing in deeds. They promise mountaines, and performe mole-hils. They will speake well of Religion, and practise nothing. They will giue faire words to their friends, and doe iust nothing for them.

Phil. The world is full of these masked counterfeits: and lying and dissembling did neuer more abound.

Theol. It is too true, that lying and dissembling

bling are most rife, and ouer-common vices amongst all sorts of men: but especially it doth ouerflow and superabound in shop-keepers and seruants. For both these make a trade and occupation of it, they can do no other but lye. It cleaueth vnto them, as the naile to the doore.

Phil. I do certainly know some shop-keepers which (to vtter their bad wares, & to blind the eies of the simple) doe trade in lying all the day long: from Sun to Sun, from the opening of the shop & windowes, to the shutting of the same. And what is their life (if customers come in apace) but swearing, lying, dissembling, & deceiuing? they will lye as fast as a dog will trot, as we say. It is wonder that their shops and all their wares do not fire ouer their heads, for their so common, so lewd, and so abominable lying; and that against their own knowledge, against their conscience, against God, against their neighbor, against heauen and earth, men and Angels.

Theol. True it is, we may maruell at the long suffering of God in this behalfe. But this is to be noted, that God doth not immediately punish all notorious sinners in this life: but reseruetb thousands to the iudgement of the great day. In this life he only culleth out some few, whom he smiteth for the example of others, that they might feare and tremble, and learne by other mens harmes to beware.

There

Therefore, euen in this life, we see before our eyes, some lyars, some drunkards, some whoremongers, some swearers, some misers of the world, some ruffians, and cut-throats, stricken downe, by the reuenging hand of God. But whereas God smiteth one of these in this life, hee letteth an hundred escape. For if he should punish all offenders in this life, to what purpose should the iudgement to come serue? If he should punish none, then we should thinke there were no God, or that hee were shut vp idle in heauen, and would doe neyther good nor euill, nor once meddle in the matters of the earth: as some Epicures haue dreamed. Therefore, to auoyd both these extremities, God in his heauenly wisedome hath thought good to meet with some, euen in this world.

Phil. I am of this mind, that the goods which men get by swearing, lying, and deceit, will neuer prosper.

Theol. You are not therein deceiued. For God will blow vpon all such kind of euill gotten goods, & they shall put it in a bottomelesse purse, as the Apostle saith, Hag 1.6. The holy Ghost in the book of the Prouerbs hath many excellent sayings to this effect: as chap. 13.11. The riches of vanitie shall be diminished, but hee which laboureth with the hand, shall encrease them. And againe, Prouerbs 10. Hee that dealeth deceitfully

deceitfull, shall become poore: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. In another place he saith, Pro. 14.27 The deceitfull man rosteth not that which he hath caught in hunting. That is, he shall not long enioy or taste the prey, which he hath gotten by fraude. For either one trouble or other will come vpon him, that hee shall not bee able to possesse, or take delight in the spoile. Therefore it is said; The bread of deceit is sweet to a man: but after his mouth shall bee filled with gravell. That is, in the end the crafty person shall meet with many troubles. For eyther his conscience will vpbraid him and checke him, or vengeance will plague him for his deceit. The feares, cares, and sorrowes, which he shall haue, shall bee as it were so many sharpe stones, to set his teeth on edge, and to vexe him. Wherefore instead of meat, he shall feed on gravell: and in stead of wheat, on pebble stones. Small pleasure is taken in the end in goods ill gotten, or liuings vnlawfully come by. For the holy Ghost hath passed sentence vpon them, that they shall neuer prosper.

Phil. It sometimes falleth out, that they prosper for a time: but as wee say, The third heire shall neuer enioy them. For God will curse them in our posteritie: and our childrens children shall feele the smart of our sins. Therfore the holy man Iob saith: The off-spring of the

the wicked shal not be satisfied with bread: for out of doubt, God will blesse that onely, which is got with a good conscience, in the works of our calling, and it shal remain blessed to vs, and our posterity, Iob 27.14. Therefore the Spirit saith, Pro. 2.7. The iust man that walketh in his vprightnes is blessed, and blessed shall his children be after him. But God will not blesse, but curse that which is got with an euil conscience: as swearing, lying, dissembling, deceiuing, &c.

Theol. Some ancient Writers haue spoken very prudently to this point. For one saith: *Iniusta lucra breues habent voluptates: longos autem dolores.* That is, Vniust gaine hath long sorrow and short ioy. Another saith, *Eligas damnum potiùs quàm turpe lucrum: illud enim semel tantùm te dolore afficiet; hoc verò semper.* That is, Thou loose rather than filthy lucre: for the one wil griene thee but once, the other for euer. A third saith, *Melius est honestè pauperem esse, quàm turpiter diuitem. Hoc enim commiserationem, illud verò reprehensionem adfert.* It is better to be honestly poore, than wickedly rich. For the one moueth pitty, the other reprofe. One of the wise Heathen also sayth; We may not wax rich vniustly; but liue of iust things, which he calleth holy things.

Ierom.

August.

Bernard.

Eurip. Phenis.

Phil. Haue wee not examples in the Scriptures of such as haue beene punished for lying?

Theol.

Theol. Yes, for we reade how the Gibeonites for their lying & dissembling, were made drudges and slaues to the Israelites, Iosh. 9. 23. Gehezi also the seruant of Elisha the Prophet, for his lying and couetousnes together, was smitten with a most grieuous leprosie, 2 Kin. 5. Ananias and Sapphira his wife, for their lying and dissembling were stricken down stark dead, by the immediate hand of God, at the rebuke of Peter, Act. 5. 5.

Zophar, one of Iobs friends, speaking of these kind of men, saith: They shall sucke the gall of Aspes, and the Vipers tongue shall slay them. They shall fly from the iron weapons, & a bow of steel shal strike them thorow, Iob 20. 16. 24.

Now then by all these examples wee may plainely see, how greatly God abhorreth lying and dissembling.

Phil. Oh therfore that we could follow the counsell of the Apostle, who saith, Col. 3. 9. Lye not one to another: sith ye haue put off the old man, with his workes. And again, Ephes. 4. 25. Cast away lying, and speak euery one the truth to his neighbour. The manner of speech which the Apostle vseth is very forcible, implying thus much: that we should in a kind of disdain or detestation cast it away, & throw it from vs, as a filthy, stinking and berayed clout, hanging about a mans necke, which hee doth suddenly snatch away, and hurleth into the fire;

as

as being ashamed, that euer it should be seene or known. Would to God therfore that we were come to such a detestation and loathing of lying, that we should euen spattle vpon it, & cry fie vpon it, & all that vse it! O that we could hate it as the Diuel, which is the Father of it: & as hell fire, which is the reward of it! O that wee were come but so far as the heathen man, who saith: I hate him as the gates of hell, who hath one thing in his tongue & another in his hart.

Homer. Iliad. 3.

Antil. Yet for all this, we find in the Scriptures, that euen some of the godly haue beene taken tardy in lying, and yet haue not sinned in so doing: as Abraham, Iacob, Rahab, the Midwiues of Egypt: and therefore why may not we doe so too?

Theol. I told you before, that you may not make the infirmities of Gods people, rules for you to liue by. And further I answer, that all these did offend in their lying. Some of them indeede, I grant, are commended for their loue to the church and charitable affections to Gods people, but none of them simply for lying: which is a thing condemned euen of the Heathen. For saith one of them; Lying doth corrupt the life of man: and euery wise and godly man doth hate lying.

Eurip. Phenis.

Antil. But may wee not lye, now and then for aduantage?

Theol. No verily, neyther is there any good

vantage

uantage to be got that way. For when you haue made vp your accounts, all charges deducted, and all expences defraied, your cleare gaines will be very small. For by your wilfull & customarie lying, you gaine inward griefe, and lose true ioyes you gaine short pleasure, and lose perpetuall glory; you gaine hell, and lose heauen; you make the Diuell your friend, and God your enemy. Now then reckon your gaine.

Phil. I pray you let vs grow towards a conclusion of this point: and shew vs briefly the chiefe causes of lying.

Theol. The chiefe causes of lying are these:

Custome.
Feare.
Couetousnesse.
The Diuell.

Phil. What be the remedies?

Theol. The remedies be these:

Disuse.
Godly boldnesse.
Contentation.
Earnest prayer.

Phil. You haue spoken enough of this vice to cause all such to abhor it, & forsake it, as haue any drop of grace, or sparke of Gods feare in them: but as for them that are filthy, let them be more filthy: Now I pray you speake your iudgment of the seuenth signe of condemnati-

on: which is drunkenneſſe.

Theol. It is ſo brutiſh and beaſtly a ſin, that a man would think it ſhould not néd to be ſpoken againſt: but that all reaſonable men ſhould euen abhorre it, and quake to thinke of it. For it is a moſt ſinnish thing: it maketh of a man a beaſt: it taketh away the heart of man from all godnes, as witneſſeth the Prophet Hoſea, cap. 4. 11. ſaying: Whordome, wine, & new wine, take away their heart. For what heart, what ſtomack, what appetite can whoremongers and drunkards haue to any thing that is good? eyther to heare, or reade the word of God, or to pray, or to meditate in the ſame? Alas, they are far from it, far from God, and far from all grace and godnes. Therefore the Prophet Ioel ſaith, cap. 1. 5. Awake yee drunkards: weepe and howle yee drinkers of wine. Yea, the mighty God of heauen doth pronounce a woe againſt them, ſaying, Eſay 5. 11. Woe vnto them that riſe vp earely to follow drunkenneſſe: and to them that continue vnto night, till the wine do enflame them. Our Lord Jeſus himſelf giueth vs a caueat to take héed of it, Luke 21. 24. Take heed, ſaith he, that your hearts bee not ouercome with ſurfeiting, and drunkennes, and the cares of this life; & ſo that day come vpon you vnawares. Thus you heare how both Chriſt himſelf, and ſundry of the Prophets do thunder down from heauen againſt this

groſſe

grosse beastlinesse, which now abounded and raigneth amongst the sons of men.

Phil. True indeed. But yet almost nothing wil make men leaue it, for it is a most rife & ouercomon vice. We see many that think themselues somebodies (& as we say, no smal fooles) which yet wilbe ouertaken with it, and therby lose all their credit & reputation with all wise men: yea do proue themselues to be but swine, & brutie beastes, as the holy Ghost auoucheth, saying: Wine is a mocker, & strong drinke is raging. Whosoeuer is deceiued therin is not wise. Pro. 20.

Theol. The wise King in the same booke doth most notably and fully describe vnto vs the inconueniences and mischieues, which doe accompany drunkennesse, and follow drunkards at the heeles. To whom (saith he) is wo? to whom is alas? to whom is strife? to whom is babbling? to whom are wounds without cause? to whom is the rednesse of the eyes? Euen to them, that tarry long at the wine: to them that go & seek out mixt wine. In the same chapter he saith: Be not of the number of them, which are bibbers of wine, or of them which glut themselus with flesh: for the drinker & the feaster shal become poore: and the sleeper shall bee cloathed with rags. Moreouer hee saith: Their eyes shall behold strange women; and that they shalbe like him that lyeth in the middest of the sea, and Pro. 23. 29. Pro. 23. 21. Pro. 23. 33.

sleepeth in the top of the Mast. In all these speeches, the holy Ghost doth, in most liuely manner describe vnto vs the properties of drunkards: euen their staggering, their reeling, their snorting, their senslesse sensualitie. Behold then what bee the cursed fruits and euents of drunkennesse. Euen these which follow: woe, alas, grieke, miserie, beggerie, pouertie, shame, iniuries, strife, babbling, brawling, fighting, quarelling, surfeiting, sicknesses, diseases, swinish sleeping, security and sensuality. So then I conclude, that drunkennesse is a vice more beseeming an hogge, than any reasonable man. And as one saith: It is the Metropolitan City of all the Prouince of vices.

Well therefore saith the Heathen Writer: When the wine is in, a man is as a running coach without a coachman.

emost. linth.

Phil. Let vs heare what executions haue beene done vpon drunkards in former ages, that now men may learn to take heed by their examples.

Theol. Amnon, one of Dauids vngracious children, beeing drunke, was slaine by his brother Absalon. Benhadad, King of Syria, being drunke, was discomfited by Ahab, King of Israel. Elah King of Israel, beeing drunke, was slaine by Zimri his seruant, and captaine of his Chariots: who also succeeded him in the Kingdome,

Sam. 13. 9.
Kin. 20. 9.
Kin. 16. 9.

donne. Lot being drunke, committed incest with his owne daughters; and therefore was punisht in his posterisie. Thus we see what executions haue been done, euen vpon Kings, for this kinde of sin. Therefore let men learne once at last to shun vice, and embrace vertue; and as the Apostle saith, to make an end of their saluation in feare and trembling. For, all our shifts and starting-holes will serue vs to no purpose in the end: but when we haue flisked hither and thither neuer so much, yet at the last we must be faine to be shut vp in Gods wrath. Gen. 19. 37.

Anil. What, I pray you, do you make it so great a matter if a man bee a little ouertaken with drink now and then? There is no man but he hath his faults: and the best of vs all may be amended. If neighbors meet together now and then at the Alehouse, and play a game at Maw for a pot of Ale, meaning no hurt; I take it to be good fellowship, and a good meanes to encrease loue amongst neighbours; and not so hainous a thing as you make it.

Theol. I see, you would fain make faire weather of it, and smooth ouer the matter with sweet words; as though there were no such great euill in it. But howsoeuer you mince it, and blanch it ouer, yet the Apostle saith flatly, that Drunkards shall not inherit the kingdome of God. I thinke, this one sentence is enough 1 Cor. 6.

to amaze and strike through the hearts of all drunkards in the world; for it is as much in effect as if the Apostle had said, All drunkards are notorious reprobates and hell-hounds, branded of Satan, and deuoted to perpetuall destruction and damnation.

But you say you meane no hurt. I answer, Whatsoeuer you mean, your actions are naught, and your fellowship as bad. For what good meaning can you haue, or what good fellowship call you it, for poore labouring men, artificers, and such like, to sit idle all the day long in Tauernes and Ale-houses, mis-spending their time and their money in gaming, rioting, swearing, staring, swilling, bezzeling, dibbing, bratling and brabbling? There is no true fellowship in it: it is meer impiety; if we may call it impiety, for poore men to liue idly, dissolutely, neglecting their callings, while their poor wiues and children sit crying at home for bread, being readie to starue, to begge, or to steale. I pray you speake your conscience, what good fellowship is there in this?

Antil. Yet for all that, there be some which abstaine from Ale-houses, and yet are as bad as any other. For they will back-bite and slander their neighbours: they will do them a shrewd turne, as soone as any other: they are enuious, they censure vs, and disdain our company: yet

we think our selues as good as they, for all their shewes of holinesse.

Theol. You speake more than you know, or can iustifie, against some better than your selfe. But, if it were so, you should not iustifie one sin by another; a lesser by a greater: which is to no purpose.

Antil. Will you then condemn all good fellowship?

Theol. No, no: I doe greatly allow godly and Christian fellowship; and acknowledge it to bee one of the chiefest comforts wee haue in the world. I know wee are commanded to loue brotherly fellowship. But as for your pot-companionshippe, I hate it, and abhorre it. For, it is written, Hee that followeth the idle, shall be filled with pouertie, Pro. 28.19. And againe, Hee that keepeth company with banqueters, shameth his father, Pro. 23.7. And in another place, Hee that louetn pastime, shall be a poore man: and he that loueth Wine and Oyle, shall not be rich, Pro. 28.17. 1 Pet. 2.

Phil. Good M. *Theologus*, talk no more with him: but let vs draw neer to the winding vp of this matter; and tell vs, in a word, which be the chiefe causes of drunkennesse.

Theol. The causes are these: Causes of drunkennesse.

Ill company.

Ale-houses.

Idleneſſe.
A wicked humor.

Phil. Which be the true remedies?

Theol. The remedies are theſe:
Auoyding of euill company.
Shunning of Ale-houſes.
Labour in your callings.
A good courſe of life.

Remedies for drunkenneſſe.

Phil. Well Sir, you haue waded far enough in this point: Let vs now come to the eighth ſigne of condemnation: which is Idleneſſe.

Theol. Concerning Idleneſſe, this I ſay briefly: that it is the mother of all vice and the ſtepdame of all vertue: yea, it is the very beldame of all enormities: It is the mother of whoredome, the mother of pride, the mother of theft, the mother of drunkenneſſe, the mother of ignorance, the mother of error, the mother of poverty, the mother of ſlandering and backebiting, prattling and goſſiping, brauling, ſcolding, quarrelling: and what not? Idleneſſe was one of the principall ſinnes of Sodome, as the Prophet Ezechiel teſtifieth, ſaying: Pride, fulneſſe of bread, and abundance of idleneſſe was in her, and in her daughters. Salomon is very plentifull in this matter: For ſaith he, The ſluggard luſteth and hath nought. And againe, The ſluggard is wiſer in his owne conceit, than ſeuen men that can giue a ſenſible reaſon. That

Ezek. 16. 49.

Pro. 13. 4.

Pro. 26. 16

is, he taketh himselfe the wisest of many, because he spareth his body, when others take pains: he saith, Yet a little sleep, yet a little slumber, yet a little foulding of the hands: and his pouertie commeth like a traueller: that is, vnawares; and his necessitie, like an armed man: that is, strongly. Then hee fouldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh. For, he hideth his hand in his bosom: and it grieueth him to put it to his mouth againe. Pro. 24. 33. Eccles. 4. 5. Pro. 26 15.

In another place the holy Ghost saith, The sloathfull man will not plough because of winter: therefore he shall beg in Sommer, and haue nothing.

Again: The slothfull man is brother to him that is a great waster. Pro. 9. 18.

Moreouer it is said, that The sluggard turnes himselfe vpon his bed, as the doore doth vpon the hinges. Pro. 26. 14.

That is, hee keepeth his bed as if he were fastened to it.

And because the Spirit will abound in this point, it is further written of the slothfull man, that hee saith, An huge Lyon is in the way: I shall be slaine in the streets. That is, when any good matter is in hand (as preaching, praying, reading, giuing to the poore, &c.) then hee draweth backe, hee shrinketh into the shell, hee findeth one let or other, one excuse or other. Pro. 26. 13.

Then

then, profit and pleasure, business and idlenesse, matters at home, and matters abroad, company, and a thousand occasions, will lyeth his way, as so many Lyons, to let and hinder him. So then we see how liuely and plentifully the holy Scriptures doe paint out the lazie lubbers of this world, and sonnes of idlenesse: which are as hardly drawne to any good thing, as a Bear to the stake. As for the duties of Religion, they go as liuely and as cheerefully about them, as a thiefe goeth vp the ladder to be executed for his theft.

Phil. I doe plainely see, that this sinne of Idlenesse is a very grosse euill, and the roote of many vices: yet for all that, there be a great number which thinke they were borne to liue idlely; as many young Gentlemen, and such like: which imagine they came into the world for no other purpose, but to hunt and hawke, card and dice, riot and reuel; and so spend their daies in pleasure and vanitie. Againe, there be many lazie lozels, and luskish youths, both in Townes and Villages, which doe nothing all the day long but walke in the streets, sit vpon the stalles, and frequent Tauernes and Alehouses. Many rich Citizens, especially women, do ordinarily lye in bed till nine of the clocke, and then forsooth rise, and make themselues readie to goe to dinner. And after they haue

well

well dined, they spend the rest of the day, and a good part of the night also, in playing, prattling, babbling, cackling, prating and gossiping. fie on this idle life. Many profane seruingmen also do falsly suppose, that they were born only to game, riot, swearre, whore, ruffle it and roist it out, & to spend their time in meer idlenesse. But, of all these well said the Heathen Philosopher, *Illas pariter indignantur & dis & homines, qui quis desidiosus*: Both God and men doe hate the idle person. Aristot.

Theol. It is a lamentable thing, to see so many men and women to liue so idlely, and so vnprofitably as they doe. For alas there be too many which follow no honest calling, liue to no vse; no body is the better for them. They doe no good, neither to the Church or Common-wealth. They are like drone-Bees: they are vnprofitable burthens of the earth. God hath no vse of them; the Church no good; the Common-wealth no benefit; their neighbours no profit; the poore no relieke. They imagine they came into the world to doe nothing but eate, and drinke, and sleepe, and rise vp to play. They thinke, they should spend their time in dicing and dancing, in whoredome and drauery, in gluttonie and belly-cheere, in masking themselues like Hogges of Epicurus Heard, in pampering their paunches, and cram-

cramming their bellies: in fatting themselues like Boars in a Franke, till they be well brawned; and (as Iob saith, Iob 21.21.& 15.27) till their bones runne full of marrow, their faces strout with fatnes, & they haue collops in their flank. Oh, what a beastly life is this! Fie vpon it, fie vpon it. It is more meet for Epicures, than Christians; for swine than for men; for Sardanapalus and Heliogabalus, and such like belli-gods, than for the professors of the Gospel. But of all such Iob saith enough, Iob. 11. They spend their dayes in pleasure, and suddenly go downe to hell.

Phil. But may it not be allowed vnto Lords and Ladies, Gentlemen and Gentlewomen, and other great ones, to liue idlely, sith they haue wherewith to maintain it?

Theol. God doth allow none to liue idely: but all, great and small, are to bee employed one way or other: eyther for the benefit of the Church or Common-wealth: or for the good gouernment of their owne households; or for the good of townes and parishes, and those amongst whom they doe conuerse; or for the succour and reliefe of the poore; or for the furtherance of the Gospel, and the maintenance of the Ministerie; or for one good vse or other. To these ends, our witts, our learning, our reading, our skill, our policie, our wealth, our health, our wisedome,

and

and authoritie, are to bee referred: knowing this, that one day we shall come to giue an account of our Wallywick, and to bee reckoned withall for the employments of our Talents. For this cause Iob saith, cap.5.7. that Man is borne to travell, as the sparkes flee vpward. And God hath laid this vpon Adam and all his posterity, In the sweat of thy browes thou shalt eate thy bread, Gen.3. Some do set down foure causes why euery man should labour diligently in his calling.

First, to beare the yoake layd vpon all mankinde, by the Lord.

Secondly, to get the Necessaries of this life.

Thirdly, to liue to the profit of humane societie.

Lastly, to auoyde euill thoughts and actions.

Saint Paul findeth great fault with some in the Church of Thessalonica, because they walked inordinately, that is, idly, and out of a lawfull calling; and therefore concluded, that such as would not labour, should not eate. So then we doe plainly see, that God alloweth idlenesse in none. For, when wee are idle (as hath been shewed before) we lie open to the diuel and his temptations, and he gets within vs, and preuaileth against vs. While Dauid tarried idly

at home in the beginning of the yeere, when Kings vsed to goe forth to the battell, hee was some ouertaken with those two foule sinnes of adultery and man-slaughter. So long as Samson warred with the Philistines, hee could neuer be taken or ouercome: but after he gaue himselfe to idlenesse and pleasure, he not only committed fornication with the Strumpet Dalilah, but also was taken of his enemies, and his eyes miserably pulled out. These examples doe shew what a dangerous sinne idlenesse is. Therefore the holy Ghost sends vs to schole to the little Creature, the Ant, to learne of her both to auoyd idlenesse, and also to vse wisedome and prouidence in our actions. Go to the Pismire, O sluggard, behold her waies, and bee wise: For shee, hauing no guide, taske-master, nor ruler, prepareth her meat in the Summer, and gathereth her foode in harueſt, Pro. 6. 6. And in good sooth it is wonderfull to obserue, what infinite paines, and vnwearied labour, this silly Creature taketh in Summer, that shee may bee well prouided for against Winter. Let vs therefore learne wisedome from her example: and let vs set before our eies the looking glasse of all Creatures. Let vs consider how the birds flye, the fishes swimme, the wormes creepe, the heauens turne, the elements moue, the sea ebbeth and floweth vncessantly: yea the earth it selfe, which is the

most

most heauie and vnwieldy creature of all other, yet neuer ceaseth his working, bringing forth his burden in Summer, and labouring diuersely all the winter, in conocting, and digesting his nourishment for the next spring. Thus wee see how all creatures are diligently and painefully exercised in their kindes. And therefore it is a great shame for vs to liue idlely, carelesly, and dissolutely. Let vs therefore learne once (at last) to fly sloath, and every one to liue faithfully, diligently, and industriously in our seuerall callings. So shall wee both keepe Sathan at the staues end, and also much sinne out of our soules: which otherwise idlenesse will force in vpon vs.

Phil. I must needs confesse, that idlenesse is a grosse vice, in whomsoeuer it is found. But specially, in my iudgement, it is most odious in Magistrates and Ministers.

Theol. That is so in truth. For they ought to be the guides, gouernours, shepheards, & watchmen ouer the people of God. And therefore for them to neglect their duties and charges, is a most horrible thing, sith it concerneth the hurt of many. Therefore well said the Heathen Poet, *Hom. l.2.* A Magistrate or Minister may not be lazie or sloathfull, to whom the nursing of the people is giuen in charge, and of whom many things are to be cared for.

What a lamentable thing therefore is it, when Magistrates are prophane, vnreligious, popish, vicious, and negligent in the duties of their calling? And how much more lamentable is it, when Ministers neglect their studies, slack preaching and prayer, and giue vp themselues, some to couetousnesse, some to pride, some to husbandry, some to other worldly affaires, and some to spent their time idlely in Tauernes, Ale-houses, gaming, rioting, and lewd company? Would to God therefore that both these kinds of publike persons would cast off idlenesse and sloath, and with diligence, faithfulnesse, care and conscience, performe the duties of their places. For it is an excellent thing for any to be a good man in his place: As a good Magistrate that ruleth well, that gouerneth wisely, which fauoureth good men, and good causes, and defendeth them: which also setteth himselfe against bad men and bad causes, and punisheth them sharpely and seuerely: which moreouer mainetaineth vertue, euen of a very loue he beareth vnto it in his heart: and punisheth vice, of a very zeale and hatred against it: and not for his credit only, or to please some, or because he must needs doe it, and can doe no lesse, or for any such sinister respect: but euen of a loue to God, a care of his glory, a conscience of duety, and a feruent zeale against

sin.

sinne. So likewise, it is a notable thing for a Minister to bee a good man in his place: to be studious in the Law of God, diligent and painfull in preaching; and that out of a love of God, a zeale of his glory, deepe pitie and compassion toward the soules of the people, seeking by all meanes possible to winne them vnto God, carrying himselfe in all his actions amongst them, wisely, religiously, vnblameably, and inoffensively.

So againe: it is a worthy thing to bee a good rich man, which doth much good with his riches, which keepeth a good house, releeueth the poor, ministreth to the necessities of the Saints, and giueth cheerfully, and with discretion, where need is.

So also, it is a commendable thing to bee a good neighbour, a good Towns-man, by whom a man may liue quietly, peaceably, joyfully and comfortably.

And lastly, to bee a good poore man: that is, humble, lowly, duetifull, painefull, readie to helpe, and ready to please. Oh, I say, this is a most excellent and glorious thing, when euerie man keepeth his standing, his range and his ranke; when all men, with care and conscience, performe the duetie of their places: when the husband doth the duty of an husband; and the wife, of a wife: when the father doth the duty

of a Father; and the child, of a childe: when the Master doth the duty of a Master; and the seruant, of a seruant: when euery man setteth God before his eyes, in doing those things which especially belong vnto him. For herein consisteth the honour of God, the glory of the Prince, the crowne of the Church, the sentrelle of the Common-weale, the safetie of Cities, the strength of Kingdomes, and the very preseruation of all things.

Asun. You haue said well in some things: but yet I doe not see, but that rich men and women may liue idly, sith they haue enough wherewithall to maintaine it. For may not a man doe with his own what he list?

Theol. No verily. For you may not take your owne knife, and cut your owne throate with it: neither may you take your owne axe, and kill your owne childe with it. Therefore that reason is naught. Albeit therefore wealthy men and women haue great plenty of all things, so as they neede not labour, yet let them bee profitably employed some way or other: let them exercise themselues in one good thing or other. If they can finde nothing to doe, let them giue themselues much to priuate prayers, and reading of the Scripture, that they may bee able to instruct and exhort others. Or else let Ladies and Gentlewomen doe as that good woman

Dorcas

Dorcas did; that is, buy cloth, cut it out, work it, sew it, make shirts, smocks, coats and garments, and give them to the poore, when they have so done. For it is said of Dorcas, that shee was a woman full of good workes, and almes-deedes which shee did, Acts 9. 36, 39. She was a merciful and tender hearted woman, she was the poore mans friend, shee cloathed the poore and naked, shee knew it was a sacrifice acceptable to God. Oh that the wealthy women of our Land would follow the example of Dorcas! But (alas!) these dayes bring forth few Dorcases.

Phil. As you have shewed vs the causes of the former evils: so now, I pray you, shew the causes of this also.

Theol. The causes of Idleness are, — Causes of idleness.
Evill examples.
Bad education.
Living out of a calling.

Phil. Shew vs also the remedies. — Remedies against idleness.

Theol. The remedies are,
Good education.
Labour in youth.
Good examples.
Diligence in a lawfull calling.

Phil. Now then let vs come to the last signe

of condemnation, which is oppression. And I beseech you, good Sir, speak your mind of it out of the Scriptures.

Theol. It is so infinite a matter, that I know not where to beginne, or where to make an end of it. It is a bottomlesse sinke of most grievous enormities. I shall enter into a Labyrinth, where I shall not know how to get out againe. But, sith you are desirous to heare something of it, this I say, that, It is a most cruell monster, a bloody vice, a most vgly and hideous fiend of hell. The Scriptures in very many places doe cry out vpon it, arraigning it, adiudging it, and condemning it downe to hell. They doe also thunder and lighten vpon all those which are stained and corrupted with this vice; calling them by such names, and giving them such titles, as are taken from the effects of this sinne, and most fit for oppressours: as namely, that

Isay 3.15. They grinde the faces of the poore; that, They
Amos 8.6 plucke off their skinnes from them, and their
Micah 3.2 flesh from their bones; that, They eate them vp, as they eate bread. These are they which
Psal. 14.4 strive to deuoure all (like saluage beasts) and to get the whole earth into their hands, eyther by hooke or by crooke, by right or by wrong, by oppression, fraud, and violence. These Caterpillers and Cormorants of the earth are like vnto the Whale-fish, that swallowed vp

quicke

quickly then little fishes. They are like a Lion that deuoureth other beasts. They are like the Faulcon, which seizeth, pluméth and preyeth vpon other fowles. These greedy Wolues deuour all, and swallow vp the poore of the Land. Therefore the Prophets of God doe thunder out many great woes against them.

First, the Prophet Esay saith, cap. 5. 8. Wo vnto them that ioyne house to house, and field to field, till there be no place for the poor to dwell in, that they may bee placed by themselues in the midst of the earth.

Secondly, the Prophet Ieremy saith, c. 12. 13. Woe vnto him that buildeth his house by vnrighteousnes, & his chambers without equity.

Thirdly, the Prophet Micah saith, cap. 2. 2. Wo vnto them that couet fields, and take them by violence; and so oppresse a man and his house, euen a man and his heritage.

Fourthly, the Prophet Habbakkuk crieth out, saying, Woe vnto him that buildeth a Towne with bloud, and erecteth a City by iniquitie, Hab. 2. 12. S. Iames also most terribly threatneth these kind of men, saying: Go to now, you rich men, weepe and howle for your miseries that shall come vpon you. Your gold & siluer is cankered: and the rust of them shall be a witnesse against you; and shall eate your flesh as it were fire, Iames 5.

Lastly, S. Paul saith flatly, 1 Cor. 6. 10. that Extortioners shall not inherite the kingdome of God. Thus we see, how many fearfull woes, and threats are denounced from heauen against the pestilent cut-throats of the earth.

Phil. And all little enough. For they are steeped in their sinne, and the staine of it is so soked into them, as it wil hardly euer be washed out. True it is that you said, that these cruel oppressing blood-suckers are the most pernicious and pestilent vermine that creep vpon the face of the earth; and yet I thinke there were neuer moe of them than in these daies. For now the wicked world is full of such as do sundry waies bite, pinch, and nip the poore, as we see by euery daies lamentable experience. But you can speake more of it than I: Therefore, I pray you, lay open the sundry kinds of oppression vsed in these daies.

The sundry kinds of oppressions.

Theol. There is oppression by vsury.
Oppression by bribery.
Oppression by racking of Rents.
Oppression by taking excessiue fines.
Oppression in bargaining.
Oppression in letting of leases.
Oppression in letting of houses.
Oppression in letting of grounds.
Oppression in binding poore men to vnreasonable couenants.

Oppression

Oppression in thrusting poor men out of their houses.
Oppression in hiring poore mens houses ouer their heads.
Oppression in taking of fees.
Oppression by Lawyers.
Oppression by Church-officers.
Oppression by engrossers.
Oppression by forestallers.
Oppression of the Church.
Oppression of the Ministery.
Oppression of the poore.
Oppression of Widowes.
Oppression of Orphans.

And thus we see, how all swarmes with Oppressions; and nothing but Oppressions, Oppressions.

Phil. In truth, this is a most cruell and oppressing Age wherein we liue; yea, a very iron Age. It seemes, that the great ones minde nothing else: they are altogether set ypon oppression: they dote and dreame of it: they finde sweet in it, and therefore they are mad of it. As Salomon saith, Oppression maketh a wise man madde. It seemes therefore, that this vice is of such maruellous force, that it can bereaue men of their wits, and make them starke madde of getting goods by hook or by crooke; they care not how, nor from whom, so they haue it. Yet

no doubt, the most wise God hath enacted many good lawes for the suppressing of this euill, and threatens the execution of them in his owne person: and especially his law doth prouide for the safety of the poore, the fatherlesse, the widow and the stranger. But you, M. *Theologus*, can repeat the statutes better than I, because you are a professed Diuine. Therefore, I pray you, let vs heare them from you.

Theol. **In the 22. Chapter of** Exodus, **God made this law following:** You shall not trouble any widow or fatherlesse childe: If thou vexe or trouble such; and so hee call and cry vnto mee, I will surely heare his cry. Then shall my wrath be kindled, and I will kill you with the sword; & your wiues shall be widowes, & your children fatherlesse. Againe he **saith**, Deut. 22. Thou shalt not oppresse an hired seruant that is needy & poor: but thou shalt giue him his hire for his day; neyther shall the Sun goe downe vpon it (for he is poor, and therewith sustaineth his life) lest he cry against thee vnto the Lord, and it bee sinne vnto thee. **Moreouer, the Lord saith**, Exod. 22. Thou shalt doe no iniurie to a stranger: for yee were strangers in the land of Egypt. **And God himselfe threatneth**, Mal. 3. **that hee will bee a swift witnesse against those which keepe backe the hirelings wages, and vexe the Widow and the Fatherlesse.** The

Apostle

Apostle saith, Let no man oppresse or defraud his brother in any matter. For the Lord is an auenger of all such things. Salomon also saith, If in a country thou seest the oppression of the poore, and the defrauding of iustice and iudgment; bee not astonied at the matter: for hee that is higher than the highest, regardeth, and there be higher than they, Eccles. 5. 7. All these holy statutes and lawes, enacted and prouided against oppressors, doe plainly shew, what care the Lord hath for his poore, distressed, and desolate people. 1 Thes. 4. 6.

Phil. But these oppressing hell-hounds are such as care for nothing. No law of the Almighty can bridle them: nothing can feare them: nothing can restraine them: they haue made a couenant with Hell and Death. They are frozen in their dregs, they are past feeling. And, as Iob saith, cap. 24. 14. These are they that abhor the light: they know not the wayes thereof, neither continue in the pathes thereof. Their hearts are as hard as the Adamant. Nothing can moue them, nothing can worke vpon them. There is great crying out euery where of the stone in the reines, which indeed is a great torment to the body: but there is no complaining of the stone in the heart, I meane, a stony heart; which is the forest disease that possibly can fall into the soule of a man: and yet

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in these times it groweth very rife. For mens hearts are as hard as brasse, and as the neather Millstone, as the Scripture speaketh. For many, especially of these vnmercifull and oppressing tyrants, say in their hearts, God will do neither good nor euill. Therefore they put the euill day far from them, and approach to the seat of iniquitie. They are at ease in Sion: they lye vpon beds of Iuorie, and stretch themselues on their beds, and eate the Lambs of the flocke, and the calues out of the stall. They sing to the sound of the viol: they inuent instruments of musick, like Dauid: they drink wine in boules: and no man is sorry for the affliction of Ioseph; that is, the troubles of Gods people. The Prophet Esay also complaines of these kinds of men, saying, They regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the work of his hands. And another Prophet saith, They say in their hearts, God hath forgot, he hides away his face, & wil neuer see. They are so proud, that they seek not for God. They think alwaies there is no God: his iudgemēts are far out of their sight: their waies alway prosper, & therfore they say in their harts, Tush we shall neuer bee moued, nor come in danger.

Zeph. 1 13.

Amos 6. 3, 6.

Esay 5. 12.

Psal. 10. 11.

Theol. You haue spoken very well touching the stoutnesse and hardnesse of these mens harts; who are so vnmercifull to their poor neighbours, that almost none can liue by them. They doe so

disturb

disturb and disquiet all things, that poor men can dwell in no rest by them. Therefore truly saith the wise King, A mighty man molesteth all, and both hireth the foole, and hires those that passe by: but the poore man speaketh with prayers; that is, by the way of entreatie and supplications. For the poor are affraid of them: they quake when they see them, as the beasts quake at the roaring of a Lion. Many poore Farmers, poore Husbandmen, poore Herds, poore Labourers, poore Widowes and Hirelings, doe quake and tremble when these greedy Wolues comes broad: And (as Iob speaketh, Iob 24 4) the poore of the earth hide themselues together. For (alas! in their hearts they cannot abide the sight of them) they had as lieue meet the diuell as meet them, for feare of one displeasure or another. For either they feare that they will warn them out of their houses, or parley about more Rent, and Praiter conuenants, or begge away their best kine, or borrow their horses, or commande their carts, or require a weekes worke of them, and never pay them for it, or a twelue-months pasture for a couple of Geldings, or that they will make one quarrel or another vnto them, one mischiefe or another. So that these poore soules cannot tell what to doe, or which way to turne them, for feare of these cruell Tormagants. They are euen weary of their liues. For they

have no remedie for these things, but euen to beare it off with head and shoulders. Therefore they often wish they were out of the world, and that they were buried quick. They say, if any will knocke them on the head, they will forgiue him. O most pitious case! O lamentable bearing! These poore silly creatures are faine to drudge and moile all the year long, in winter and summer, in frost and snow, in heate and cold, to prouide their rents, that they may be able to pay their cruell land-lord at his day. For else how shall they bee able to looke him in the face? Yet their rent is so rackt, that all they can do is little enough to pay it: and when that is payed, (alas) the poore man, and his wife, & children haue little left to take to, or to maintain themselues withal: they are faine to gnaw of a crust, to fare hardly, & go thinly clad. Sometimes they haue victuals, and sometimes none. The poore children cry for bread. Poore widdows also, and poor fatherlesse children are found weeping & mourning in their houses, and in their streetes. So that now wee may, with Salomon, Eccl. 4. 1. turn and consider all the oppressions that are wrought vnder the Sun. Wee may behold the teares of the oppressed, and none comforteth them. For the mightie ones doe wrong the weaker, euen as the stronger beasts doe push and harme the feebler. These griping oppressors doe pinch the poore euen to the

quick.

quicke. They plucke away from the fatherlesse and widowes, that little which they haue. If there bee but a row or a few sheaues left, they will haue them. If there be a little commoditie of house or land; oh what deuices they haue to win it in, and to wring it away! Their heads will goe as nie as the bed they lye vpon. They know well enough, the poore men are not able to wage law with them: and therfore they may doe what wrong they will, and shew what cruelty they lift. Hence come the tears of the oppressed: hence commeth the weeping and wailing of the poor. But alas, poore soules! they may well weepe, to ease their hearts a little; but there is none to comfort them: remedie they can haue none. But yet, assuredly, the eterlasting God doth look vpon them, & will be reuenged. For the cryes of the poor, the fatherlesse and the widowes, haue entred into the eares of the Lord of Hosts, who is an auenger of all such things; yea, a strong reuenger, as Salomon saith, Pro. 23. 14. Enter not into the fielde of the fatherlesse: for their reuenger is strong: he himselfe will pleade their cause against thee. And again he saith, Pro. 22. 16. Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither tread down the afflicted in the gate: For the Lord pleadeth their cause, and will spoile their soule that spoyle them. Wee see then, that the most iust God will be reuenged of these vnmerciful

merciſull hearts. He will not alwaies put by theſe wrongs and iniuries done to the poore.

In the eight chapter of the Prophet Amos, he ſweares by the excellencie of Iacob, that he will neuer forget any of their works. And again he ſaith by his Prophet Ieremie, Shall I not bee aueng'd on ſuch a Nation as this?

Surely, hee will ſet his face againſt them to rent them out of the earth. For indeed they are not worthy to cumbre vpon the face of the earth, or to draw breath among the ſons of men. It is written in the Booke of Pſalmes, that God will ſet theſe fellowes oppoſite againſt him, as a But to ſhoot at: that he will put them a-part, and the ſtrings of his bow ſhall he make ready againſt their faces, Pſal. 21. 12. Be aſtoniſhed at this, O ye heauens, & tremble, O thou earth. Hear this, O ye cruell land-lords, vnmerciſull oppreſſors, and blood-ſuckers of the earth. You may well be called blood-ſuckers: for you ſucke the blood of many poor men, women and children: you eat it, you drink it, you haue it ſerued in at your ſumptuous tables euery day, you ſwallow it vp, & liue by it. And as Iob ſaith, (cap. 24. 5.) The wilderness giues you and your children food: that is, you liue by robbing and murthering. But woe, woe vnto you that euer you were born. For the blood of the oppreſſed, which yee haue eaten and drunken, shall one day cry for ſpeedy vengeance a-

gainſt

gainst you: as the blood of Abel cryed against Cain. Their blood shall witnesse against you in the day of judgement: and the teares of many poore starved children, orphans and widdows, shall cry out against you. Was the Lord revenged of Achab for his cruell and unjust dealing with poore Naboth, and shall not he be revenged of you? Did the Dogs lap the blood of Achab, and shall you escape? No, no: you shall not escape. The Lord will be a swift witnesse against you, as he saith in Malachie, c. 3. Was the Lord angry with the rich of the people for oppressing the poor (so as the cry of the people, & of their wives, against their oppressours, was heard of the Almighty) and do you think you shall escape scot-free? Doth not the like cause bring forth the like effect? the like sin, the like punishment? Know therefore for certainty, that the Lord hath coffers full of vengeance against you, and one day he will unlock them, and bring them forth in the sight of all men.

1 Reg. 21.

Neh. 5.

Know also that the timber of your houses, and the stones of your walls, which you have built by oppression and blood, shall cry against you in the day of the Lords wrath, as the Prophet Habbakkuk telleth you. The stone (saith he, Hab. 2) shall cry out of the wall: and the beams out of the timber shall answer it. Where the Prophet telleth you, that the walles of your

houses,

houses, built in blood, shall cry out loud and shrill, and play the Nutrikes in that behalfe, so as they shall answer one another, on ye sides: The one shall say, Behold blood; the other, Behold murder. The one side, Behold deceit; the other, Behold cruelty. The one, Behold pilling and polling; the other, Behold couetousnes. The one, Behold robbery; the other, Behold perjury. And thus you see how the stones and timber of your houses shall descant vpon you. And howsoever you put on your brazen brows, & harden your hearts against these threatnings of the most terrible God and Lord of Hoosts; yet one day you shall (spite of your hearts) will ye, nill ye, be brought forth vnto iudgement: you shall once come to your reckoning: you shall at last be apprehended, conuinted, and arraigned at the barre of Gods tribunall seat, before the great Iudge of all the world. Then sentence shall passe against you, euen that most dreadful sentence, Mat. 25. Goe yee cursed into hell fire, there to bee tormented with the Diuell and his Angels for euer. O then wo, wo vnto you? For, what shall it profite a man to winne the whole world, and lose his owne soule? saith our Lord Iesus, Mar. 16. Surely, euen as much, as if hee should winne a farthing, and lose an hundred thousand pound. For if he shall bee cast into hell fire, which hath not giuen of his owne goods

Ezech. 1

righte-

rightroully gotten, as our Saviour anouncheth; where then shall hée bée cast, that hath stollen other mens goods? And if he shall be damned that hath not cloathed the naked, what shall become of him that hath made naked them that were cloathed? Oh therefore, repent in time, O yée cruell oppressours: séeke the Lord whilst hee may bee found: call vpon him while he is néere: lay aside your salvage crueltie: visit the fatherlesse and widow in their distresse: deale your bread to the hungry: helpe them to their right which suffer wrong: deale mercifully with your tenants: rack not your Rents any more: pinch not the poore soules for whom Christ dyed; pitty them, I say, but pinch them not: deale kindly and friendly with them: remember your great accounts: consider the shortnesse of your daies, and the vanitie of your life: rent your hearts, and not your clothes. Turne vnto the Lord with all your heart, with weeping, fasting, and mourning: prevent Gods wrath with a sacrifice of teares: pacifie his anger with the calues of your lips, and with a contrite spirit: be grieued for that which is past, and amend that which is to come: stand it out no more at the swords point against God: for, it will not beate you to strive; he is too strong for you. Your only wisdome is to come-in. Come-in therfore, come-in, ye rebellious generation: submit your selves

to the great King: humble your selues vnder his mighty hand: cast downe your swords and targets: yeeld vnto our God. So shall you escape the vengeance to come: so shall God accept you, haue mercie vpon you, receiue you to fauour, grant you a generall pardon for all your rebellions, and admit you into the number of his faithfull and loyall subiects.

Phil. I conceiue by diuers speeches which you haue alledged, that goods got by oppression and crueltie, will neuer prosper long. For, oppressers coine their mony vpon their neighbours skins. How then can it be blessed?

Theol. You haue spoken a truth. For, as it hath beene shewed before, that those goods which are got by swearing and lying, are cursed; so all these that are got by oppression and violence, are more cursed. Therefore the Lord saith by his Prophet Ieremy, cap. 17. 11. As the Partrich gathers the yong which she hath not brought forth: so hee that gathers riches, and not by right, shall leaue them in the midst of his daies; and at his end shall be a foole, and his name shall be written in the earth.

Phil. Would to God our Magistrates and Gouernours would take speedy order for the remedying of these things, & for the redressing of such grieuous enormities as are among vs; or that they themselues would step-in, and deliuer

iuer the oppressed from the hand of the oppresser.

Theol. Iob was an excellent man for such matters. For, it is said of him, that He brake the iawes of the vnrighteous man, and pluckt the prey out of his teeth, Iob 29.27. Where we see how Iob was a meanes to deliuer the innocent, & to pull the Lamb out of the Lions clawes. Moreouer, it is written of him in the same chapter, vers. 25. that ỳ blessing of him that was ready to perish came vpon him, & that he caused the widowes heart to reioyce; that he was the eye to the blinde, the feet to the lame, & the father to the poor: and when he knew not the cause, he sought it out diligently. O what a notable man was this! O that we had many Iobs in these daies! Wise Salomon doth most gravely aduise vs all to follow Iobs example in this behalfe. Deliuer (saith he, Pro. 14. 12.) them that are oppressed and drawne to death: for, shouldst thou withdraw thy selfe from them which goe downe to the slaughter? Would to God this counsel were wel weighed and practised amongst vs.

Phil. I maruell much, with what face these cruell oppressors can come before God in his holy Temple, to pray, and offer vp their sacrifices vnto him. For wee see, many of them though they haue such foule hands, and foule hearts, as wee haue heard; yet for all that, will

most impudently presume to come to the Church and pray: or at least, when they are laid in their beds a nights, and half a sleep, then wil they mumble ouer their praiers, or be pattering some Pater-nosters.

Theol. Alas, alas, poor soules! all that they do in matters of Gods worship, is but hypocrisie and dissimulation. For, in truth they are not for God: they loue him but from the teeth outward: their mouthes are with him but their heart goes after couetousnesse, and their hands are full of blood. And therefore God doth both abhor them and their prayers. For, saith hee, Esay 1. 15. Though they stretch out their hands, yet will I hide mine eyes from them: and though they make many prayers, yet will I not heare them. For their hands are full of blood.

Moreouer the holy Ghost saith, Pro. 28. 9. He that turns away his eare from hearing the Law, euen his praier is abominable. Dauid saith, Psal. 66. 18. If I regard wickednes in my heart, God will not hear my praier. Our Lord Iesus also affirmeth, that God hears not sinners, Ioh. 9. 31. that is, stubborne and careless sinners. So then wee may cleerly see (by all these testimonies of holy writ) what account God makes of the praiers of oppressors, and all other profane & vngodly men: namely, that he doth hate them, & abhor them as most lothsome and odious in his sight.

Phil.

Phil. Now in conclusion, shew vs the causes of oppression.

Theol. The causes are these:

Cruelty.
Couetousnesse.
Hard-heartedness.
An euill conscience.
The Diuell.

Cause oppression.

Phil. Let vs hear also the remedies?

Theol. The remedies be these:

Pitty.
Contentation.
Tender affections.
A good conscience.
Much prayer.

Remedies for oppression.

Phil. Now, Sir, you haue at large vttered your minde concerning these grosse corruptions of the world, and haue plainely and euidently proued them to be the deadly poison of the soule: so also, I pray you, satisfie vs in this; whether they be not hurtfull also to the body, goods and name.

Theol. I haue dwelt the longer in these common vices of the world, because almost all sorts of men are stained with one or other of them: and therefore they can neuer bee enough spoken against. For, the whole world lyeth in them, as S. Iohn testifieth. If men therefore could be recouered of these diseases, no doubt there would

1 Iohn 5

bée ready passage made for the abundance of grace; and wee should haue a most flourishing Church and Common-wealth: but as long as these doe lye in the way, there is small hope of greater mercies and blessings to be poured vpon vs; or that euer we shall come to haue an inward conuersation with God. For, these vices blinde our eyes, burden our hearts, and (as the Prophet Ieremy saith, cap. 5. 25.) hinder goods things from vs. But touching your petition, I must néeds grant, that as these vices are the very bane of the soule, and most certain signes of condemnation; so are they very dangerous to the body, goods and name: yea, and to the whole land, both Church and Common-wealth.

Phil. Shew vs out of the Scriptures what danger they bring to the bodie.

Theol. The Lord our God saith, that if wée will not obey him, nor kéepe his Commandements (but break his conenant) he will appoint ouer vs hastie plagues, consumptions, and the burning ague to consume the eyes, and to make the heart heauie. So also he saith, that if wee will not obey his voyce, to obserue all his commandements and ordinances, that then hée will make the pestilence cleane vnto vs, vntill hée haue consumed vs; that hée will smite vs with the Feauer, with the botch of Egypt, with the Emrods, with the Scab, and with the Itch,

euit. 26. 5.
euit 28. 1.

that

that also he will smite vs with madnesse, & with blindnesse, and with astonishment of heart. So then you see what great euils the Lord threatens to inflict vpon our bodies in this life, for these and such like sinnes. But on the contrary, the holy Ghost saith, Pro. 3. 7. Fear God, and depart from euill: so health shall be to thy nauell, and moysture to thy bones.

Phil. What euill doe these forenamed sins bring vpon vs in our goods and outward estate?

Theol. They cause God to curse vs in all that wee set hand vnto, as plentifully appeareth in the forenamed chapters: where the Lord saith thus, If thou wilt not obey the commandements of the Lord thy God, cursed shalt thou be in the towne, cursed also in the field: cursed shall bee thy basket and thy store: cursed shall bee the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, and the increase of thy kine, and the flockes of thy sheepe. Cursed shalt thou bee when thou commest in, and cursed also when thou goest out. The Lord shall send vpon thee cursing, trouble and shame, in all that thou setteſt thy hand vnto. And further hee saith, That he will break the staffe of their bread; that ten women shall bake their bread in one ouen, and they shall deliuer their bread againe by weight, and they shall eate and not be satisfied.

Deut. 3

Deut. 21

You doe therefore apparently see, that these sins will draw downe Gods wrath vpon vs, and all that we haue.

Phil. What hurt doe these sins to our good name?

Theol. They bring reproach, shame, & infamy vpon vs, and cause vs to bee abhorred and contemned of all good men. They do vtterly blot out our good name. For, as vertue makes men honorable and reuerend: so vice makes men vile and contemptible. This is set down, where the Lord threatens Israel, that for their sins and disobedience, he will make them a prouerb and common talke; yea, a reproach and astonishment amongst all people, 2 King. 9. 7. In sundry other places of the Prophets, he threatens for their sins to make them a reproach, a shame, an hissing, and nodding of the head to all Nations, Ezech. 5. 5.

Phil. I do verily thus thinke, that as sin generally doth staine euery mans good name, which all are chary and tender of: so especially it doth blot those which are in high places, and of speciall note for learning, wisdome and godlinesse, Eccles. 10. 1.

Theol. You haue spoken most truly, and agreeable to the Scriptures. For, the Scripture saith, As a dead Flie causeth the Apothecaries oyntment to stinke: so doth a little folly, him that is in estimation for wisdome & for honor.

Where

Where Salomon sheweth, that if a Flie get into the Apothecaries box of oyntment, and dye, and putrefie in it, she marreth it though it be neuer so precious: euen so, if a little sin get into the heart, and breake out in the forehead of a man of great fame for some singular gifts, it will blurre him, though he be neuer so excellent.

Phil. Shew me this, I pray you, more plainly.

Theol. We obserue this, in all experience, that if a Noble-man bee a good man, and haue many excellent parts in him of courtesie, patience, humilitie, and loue of Religion; yet if he bee couetous, the common people will haue their eye altogether vpon that: and they will say, Such a Noble-man is a very good man, but for one thing: he is exceeding couetous, oppresseth poore men, and dealeth hardly with his Tenants, keepeth no house, doth little good in the Countrey where he dwelleth. And this is it that marreth all.

Moreouer, let a Iudge, a Iustice, or a Magistrate, bee endued with excellent gifts of prudence, policie, temperance, liberalitie, and knowledge in the law: yet if they bee giuen to anger, or taking of bribes, oh, how it wil disgrace them amongst the people! for, they will say, He is a worthy man indeed, but there is one thing in him that marreth all: he is an exceeding angry and furious man, he is as angry as a wasp, he

will

will bée a pelting chafe for euerie trifle: hée will fret and fume, if you doe but blow vpon him. And besides this, hée is a very corrupt man: hée is a great taker of bribes: hée loueth well to bée bribed: hée will doe any thing for bribes.

Furthermore, if any Preacher bée a man of great gifts, the common people will say of him: Oh, he is a worthy man indeed, an excellent Scholler, a profound Diuine, a singular man in a Pulpit: but yet for all that, hée hath a shrewd touch which marreth all; hée is an exceeding proud man: hée is as proud as Lucifer: Hée hath very great gifts indeede, but I warrant you hée knoweth it well enough. For, hée carrieth his creft very high, and looketh very sternely and disdainfully vpon all other men. Hée is vnmeasurably puft-vp with ouerweening, and thinketh that hée toucheth the clouds with his head. Thus therefore wee see, how the dead Flies marre all, and how some one sinne doth disgrace a man that otherwise doth excell.

Phil. What is the cause why some one sinne doth so blot and smut the most excellent men?

Theol. The reason hereof is, because such men are as a candle set vpon a candlestick, or rather vpon a scaffold or mountaine, for all

men

men to behold and looke vpon. And sure it is, they haue a thousand eyes vpon them euery day; and that not onely gazing vpon them, but also pying verie narrowly into them, to spie out the least mote, that they may make a mountaine of it. For, as in a cleane white paper, one little spot is sone espyed; but in a peece of browne paper, twenty great blurres scant discerned: euen so in Noble-men, Iudges, Magistrates, Iustices, Preachers and Professours, the least spotte or specke is sone seene into; but, among the baser sort, and most grosse liuers, almost nothing is espied or regarded.

Phil. Sith the eyes of all men are bent and fixed vpon such men as are of some note, therfore they had need very heedfully to looke to their steps, that they may take away all aduantage from them that seek aduantage.

Theol. Yes verily. And furthermore, they had néd to pray with Dauid alwaies, Psal. 119. 133. Direct my steps, O Lord, in thy word; and let none iniquitie haue dominion ouer me. And againe, Psal. 41. 12. Order my goings, that my foot-steps slip not: vphold me in my integrity. For, if such men bee neuer so little giuen to swearing, to lying, to drinke, or to women, it is espyed by and by: and therewithall their credit is cracked, their fame ouer-cast, their

glory

glory eclipsed, and the date of their good name presently expired.

Phil. Now as you haue shewed what great hurt these sins doe bring vpon our soules, bodies, goods and names: so also, I pray you, shew what danger they bring vpon the whole Land.

Theol. Questionlesse, they pull down the wrath of God vpon vs all, and giue him iust cause to break all in peeces, and vtterly to subuert and ouerthrow the good estate both of Church & Common-wealth; yea, to make a finall consumption and desolation of all. For, they be the very firebrands of Gods wrath, and as it were touchwood to kindle his anger and indignation vpon vs. For, the Apostle saith, Col. 3.6. For such things commeth the wrath of God vpon the children of disobedience.

Phil. Declare vnto vs out of the Scriptures, how the Lord in former times hath punished whole nations and kingdomes for these and such like sinnes.

Theol. In the fourth of Hosea, vers. 2. the Lord telleth his people, that he hath a controuersie with the inhabitants of the Land (and the reason is added) because there was no truth, nor mercie, nor knowledge of God in the Land. By swearing, lying, killing, stealing and whooring, they breake-out, and bloud toucheth bloud.

bloud. Therefore shall the Land mourne: and euery one that dwelleth therein shal be cut off.

Here then wee see what it is that will incense God against vs, and cause vs all to mourne. So likewise the Lord threatneth by his Prophet Amos, cap. 3. 8. that for the cruelty and oppression of the poore, he would plague the whole Land. Shall not the Land tremble for this (saith the Lord) and euery one mourne that dwels therein?

Againe, the Lord saith by the Prophet Ieremie, cap. 7. 19, 20. Doe they prouoke mee to anger, and not themselues, to the confusion of their owne faces? Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, mine anger and my wrath shall be poured vpon this place, vpon man and beast, vpon the trees of the field, and vpon the fruit of the ground: and it shall burne, and not bee quenched.

Againe, the Lord saith, Ieremie 22. 5. If yee will not heare these words, I sweare by my selfe (saith the Lord) that this house shall bee waste, & I will prepare destroyers against thee, euery one with his weapons, and they shall cut downe thy chiefe Cedar-trees, and cast them into the fire.

Likewise the Lord threatneth by his Prophet Ezechiel, cap. 5. 7. saying, Because you haue not walked in my statutes, nor kept my iudge-

ments,

ments: therefore behold, I, euen I, come against thee, and will execute iudgement in the midst of thee, euen in the sight of the nations: and I will do in thee, that I neuer did before, neither will I do any more the like, because of all thine abominations. For, in the midst of then, the fathers shall eat their sons, and the sons shall eate their fathers. Againe, by the same Prophet the Lord saith, Ezek. 7. 23, 27. The land is full of the iudgement of bloud, and the City full of cruelty. Wherefore I will bring the most wicked of the heathen, and they shal possesse their houses. I will also make the pomp of the mightie to cease, and the holy places shalbe defiled. When destruction commeth, they shall seeke peace, and not haue it. Calamity shall come vpon calamitie, and rumour vpon rumour. Then shall they seek a vision of the Prophet: but the Law shall perish from the Priests, and counsell from the Ancient. The King shall mourne, and the Prince shall be clothed with desolation, & the hands of the people in the Land shall bee troubled. I will doe vnto them according vnto their waies, and according to their iudgement I will iudge them: and they shall know, that I am the Lord. Last of all, the Lord saith by his Prophet, Ieremie 4. 19. Heare, O earth: behold, I will cause a plague to come vpon this people, euen the fruit of their owne

ima-

imaginations, because they haue not taken heed to my words and to my Law; but cast it off. Almost innumerable places to this purpose are to be found in the writings of the Prophets: but these may suffice to praeue the maine point; to wit, that the iust God doth punish whole nations and kingdomes for the sinnes and rebellions thereof.

Phil. Sith all these sins (for the which the Lord did execute such vniuersall punishments vpon his owne people) doe abound and ouerflow in the Land, may we not iustly feare some great plague to fall vpon vs? And the rather, because our transgressions doe increase daily, and grow to a full height and ripenesse; so as it seemes, the haruest of Gods vengeance draweth near, and approacheth.

Theol. We may indéed iustly fear and tremble. For, if God spared not the Angels that sinned, how shall he spare vs? If he spared not his owne people, what can we looke for? If hée spared not the naturall branches, how shall hée spare vs that are wilde by nature? Are wée better than they? Can we looke to bee spared, when they are punished? Are not our sinnes as many, and as great as theirs? Doth not the same cause bring forth the same effect? Is the Arme of the Lord shortned? Or is not God the same iust God to punish sinne now,

that

that he was then? Yes, yes assuredly And therefore we haue great cause to mourne and lament, to quake and tremble, because there is a naked sword of vengeance hanging ouer our heads. Thus did Ieremy, cap. 4. 19. thus did Amos, cap. 5. 6. thus did Habakkuk, cap. 3. 16. when they plainely saw the imminent wrath of God approaching vpon the people of Israel and Iuda.

Phil. I thinke we may the rather doubt and feare, because the punishment of these forenamed vices is neglected by the Magistrate. For, commonly when they that beare the sword of iustice, do not draw it out to punish notorious offenders and malefactours, the Lord himselfe will take the matter into his owne hands, and be reuenged in his owne person: which is most dreadfull and dangerous. For, it is a fearefull thing to fall into the hands of the liuing God, Heb. 10. 31.

Theol. You haue spoken a truth. For, if those which are Gods deputies and vice-gerents in the earth, do their duties faithfully in punishing vice, and maintaining vertue: in smiting the wicked, and fauouring the godly: then assuredly euill shall bee taken out of Israel, Gods wrath preuented, and his iudgements intercepted, as it is written: Phineas stood vp and executed iudgement, and the plague was stayed, Psal. 109. 30. But if they (for feare, fauour, affection, gaine, flattery,

flatterie, briberie, or any other sinister respect) will bee too sparing and remisse in punishing of grosse offenders, and bee rather ready to smite the righteous; then doe they exceedingly prouoke Gods wrath against the Land, and against themselues.

Phil. One thing I doe greatly lament: that there be eyther none at all, or very slender censures, either by the Ciuill, or Ecclesiasticall authoritie, for diuers of these forenamed vices: as pride, couetousnesse, oppression, lying, idlenesse, swearing, &c.

Theol. It is a thing to bee lamented indeede. For where doe wee see a proud man punished, a couetous man punished, an oppressor punished, a swearer punished, a lyer punished, an idle person punished? Now, because they know they cannot, or shall not be punished, therefore they are altogether hardened, and emboldened in their sinnes, as the Wise man saith: Because sentence against an euill worke is not executed speedily; therefore the hearts of the children of men are fully set in them to doe euill.

Phil. One thing I do much muse at, wherin also I desire to be further satisfied, *viz.* what is the cause that vnder so godly a Prince, so many good lawes, and so much good preaching and teaching, there should notwithstanding be such an excesse and ouerflowing of sin in all estates.

Theol. The causes hereof are diuers and manifold. But I will nominate foure especiall ones in my iudgement. The first is, mans naturall corruption: which is so strong, as almost nothing can bridle it. The second is, ill presidents, and externall prouocations to euill. The third is, the want of teaching in many congregations in the land: by reason where of, many know not sinne to be sinne. The last reason is, the corruption and negligence of some such as are in authoritie.

Phil. Doth not this inundation & ouerflowing of sinne, with the impunitie of the same, prognosticate great wrath against vs?

Theol. Yes vndoubtedly, as it hath in part beene shewed before. And there be diuers other presages of wrath, though not of the same kind: which are these;

Nine predictions, or foresignes of wrath.

Vnthankefulnesse for the Gospel.
The abuse of our long peace.
Our secret Idolatries.
Our generall security.
Our ripenesse in all sinne.
Our abuse of Gods mercie.
Our abuse of his long patience.
The coldnesse of Professors.
Our not profiting by former iudgements: as pestilence, famine, death, and the shaking of the sword.

Phil.

Phil. This last I take to bee a speciall token of approaching vengeance: that wee haue not profited by former warnings.

Theol. True indeed: For it is an ordinarie thing with God, when men will not profit by milde corrections, and common punishments, then to lay greater vpon them. And when a former trouble doth vs no good, we are to fear a fiall consuming trouble. For so we reade in the Prophecie of Hosea, c. 5. 12. that at the first, God was to Ephraim as a Moth, & to Iudah as rottenness: but afterward when as they profited not by it, he was to Ephraim as a Lion, and to Iudah as a Lions whelp. So the Lord saith in another place, Leu. 26. 18. that if they wil not come in, & yelde obedience at the first call of his wrath, then hee will punish them seuen times more: but if they continue in their stubbornnesse, then hee threatneth to bring 7. times more plagues vpon them, according to their sinnes. If by all these they would not bee reformed, but walke stubbornely against him, then hee threatneth yet 7. times more, for their sinnes: and the fourth time, yet seuen times more The proofe hereof wée haue in the Booke of the Iudges. Where we reade, how the people of Israel for their sins, were in subiection to the King of Aram-Naharaim, eight yeares: afterward because they profited nothing by it, but returned to their old

Verse 21
Verse 2
Verse 28
Iudg. 3.

sinnes, therefore they serued Eglon King of
ud.3. Moab eighteene yeeres. After that againe, for
their new sinnes and prouocations, the Lord
ud.6.1. gaue them vp into the hands of Midian, seuen
yeares. After all this, for the renewing of their
sinnes, the Lord sold them into the hands of
ud.10.7. the Philistims and the Ammonites, which did
sal.103.3 grieuously vex and oppresse them for the space
of eighteene yeares. Last of all we reade, that
when neither famine, nor pestilence could
cause them to returne vnto him, then hee deli-
uered them vp to the sword of their enemies,
and held them in bondage and captiuitie three-
score and ten yeares. After all this, when they
were deliuered out of captiuitie, and returned
home safely to their owne Nation, and inioyed
some good time of peace and rest, yet at last they
fell to the renewing of their sins: and therefore
the Lord plagued them most grieuously, by the
diuided Greeke Empire, euen the Magog and
rec.38. Egypt, Seleuciæ & Lagidæ, and that by the space
an. 7. almost of three hundred yeares. And this is it,
an. 11.
os.3.4. that the Prophet Hosea did foretell, that the
children of Israel should remaine many daies
without a King and without a Prince, without
an offering, and without an image, without an
Ephod, and without Teraphim.

Phil. You haue very largely layde open
this last token of vengeance: to wit: that
God

God at the first doth but beat vs vpon the coat: but if we continue in sinne, he will whip vs on the bare skin: and if men will not yeeld at the first gentle stroakes, then he will strike harder and harder, till hee haue broken our stout stomacks, and made our great hearts come down. Therefore it is good yeelding at the first: for we shall get nothing by our sturdinesse against him. Wee doe but cause him to double his stroakes, and strike vs both sideling and ouerthwart: For he cannot endure that we should gruntle against him with stubborne sullennesse. But now to the point. Sith there are so many presages and fore-signes of Gods wrath, I pray you shew what it is that stayeth the execution and very downfall of the same.

Theol. **The prayers and teares of the faithfull are the speciall meane, that stay the hand of God from striking of vs. For the prayers of the righteous are of great force with him: euen able to do all things.** S. Iames saith, c.5.17. **that** the praier of a righteous man auaileth much, if it be feruent: **and bringeth the example of** Elias, **to proue it: For saith he,** Though Elias was a man subiect to the like passions that we be, yet was he able by his prayers, both to open & shut the heauens. Abraham **likewise** (Gen. 18.) **preuailed so farre with God by his prayers for** Sodome, **that if there had beene but ten iust men**

found in it, it had bée spared. The almighty God saith in the 15. chapter of Ieremy v.1. Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet mine affection could not be toward this people. Which doth plainly shew: that Moses and Samuel might haue done much with him, had hée not bée ne so fully bent against his people for their sinnes, as he was. So likewise hee saith in the Prophecie of Ezechiel, cap. 14. 14. though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Iob, were amongst them, they should deliuer but their own soules by their righteousnesse. Which also sheweth, that if there had bée ne any possible entreating of him for the Land, these three men might haue done it: but now he was resolutely determined to the contrary. In respect therefore that the zealous preachers, and true professors of the Gospell doe so much preuaile with God by their prayers, they are said to bée the defence and strength of Kingdomes and Countries, of Churches and Common wealths: as it is said of Eliah, that hee was the Chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. Elisha also was enuironed with a mountaine full of horses, and Chariots of fire. And sure it is that Eliah and Elisha are not onely the Chariots and Horsemen of Israel, but also by their prayers they doe cause God himselfe to be a wall of fire round about it: as the Prophet saith in the 22. of Ezechiel,

Kin. 2. 11

Kin. 6. 17

Ezechiel, verse 30. the Lord God saith: I sought for a man among them, that should make vp the hedge, and stand in the gap before mee for the land; that I might not destroy it: but I found none. Which sheweth, that if there had beene but some few to haue stood in the breach, he would haue spared the whole land. This also appeareth more plainely in the Prophecie of Ieremie, cap. 5. where the Lord saith thus: Runne to and fro by the streets of Ierusalem, behold, and enquire in the open places thereof, if yee can finde a man, or if there bee any that executeth iudgement and seeketh the truth: and I will spare it. Oh then marke and consider, what a man may doe: yea what one man may doe: what an Abraham may doe: what a Moses may doe: what an Eliah may doe: what a Daniel, what a Samuel, what a Iob, what a Noah may doe! Some one man (by reason of his high fauour with the Eternall) is able sometimes to doe more for a land by his prayers and teares, than many prudent men by their counsell, or valiant men by their swords. Yea, it doth euidently appeare (in the sacred volume of the holy Ghost) that some one poore Preacher, being full of the Spirit and Power of Eliah, doth more in all his study (eyther for offence, or defence: eyther for the turning away of wrath, or the procuring of mercie) than a

Camp royall, euen forty thousand strong: or as the spirit speaketh, Can. 3.7. Though they all haue their swords girded to their thighes, & be of the most valiant men in Israel. And this is cléerly proued in one verse of the book of Psalms, where the Prophet hauing reckoned vp the sins of the people, addeth, Therefore the Lord minded to destroy them, had not *Moses* (his chosen) stood in the breach, to turne away his wrath, lest hee should destroy them, Psal. 106.23. Sée therefore what one man may do with God. Some one man doth so binde the hands of God, that when he should strike, he hath no power to do it: as it is said of Lot, Gen. 19.30. I can do nothing till thou be come out. Sée how the Lord saith he can doe nothing, because he will doe nothing: He doth wittingly and willingly suffer his hands to be manacled and bound behinde him, for some fewes sake, which hee doth make more account of than all the world besides; so precious and deare are they in his sight. Likewise it is written, that the Lord was exceedingly incensed against the Israelites for their Idolatrous Calfe, which they made in Horeb: yet he could doe nothing, because Moses would not let him. And therefore he falleth to entreating of Moses, that Moses would let him alone, and intreat no more for them. Oh (saith the Lord to Moses, Exo. 32. 10.) let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot

against

against this people, and that I may consume them. Thus we see, that except Lot goe out of the Citie, and Moses let him alone, he can do nothing. O the profoundnesse and altitude of Gods mercy, toward mankinde! O the height and depth, length and breadth, of his loue toward some! O that the most glorious and inuisible God should so greatly respect the sons of men: for what is man, that hee should be mindefull of him? or the sonne of man that hee should regard him? Let vs therefore that are the Lords remembrancers, giue him no rest, nor let him alone vntill wee haue some securitie and good assurance from him, that he will turne away from vs the wrath which wee most iustly haue deserued; that he will spare vs, and be merciful vnto vs. Yea, and as the Prophet saith, Esay 62.7. Let vs neuer leaue him nor giue him ouer, til he repair, & set vp Ierusalem, the praise of the world: lest for default hereof, that bee charged vpon vs, which was charged vpon the head of some of the Prophets in Israel, Ezek. 13.4,5. that they were like the foxes in ẖ waste places, that they had not risen vp in the gaps, neither made vp the hedge for the house of Israel. For now adayes alas, wee haue many hedge-breakers, few hedge-makers; many openers of gaps, few stoppers: many makers of breaches, to let-in the floods of Gods wrath vpon

vs,

vs, but very few, that by true repentance goe about to make vp the breach and to let downe the sluces, that the gushing streames of Gods vengeance may be stopt and stayed.

Phil. I doe now plainely see, that there bee some in high fauour with God, and as wee say, greatly in his bookes; sith his loue is so great vnto them, that for their sakes he spareth thousands.

Theol. It is written in the Prouerbs of Salomon, that the righteous in a land are the establishment of the Kings throne; and the wicked, the ouerthrowing of the same. The words are these: Take away the drosse from the siluer, and there will proceede a vessell for the finer. Take away the wicked from the King, & his Throne shall be established in righteousnes, Pro. 25. 4. Likewise in another place the Wise man affirmeth, that the righteous are the strength & bulwarks of Cities, Townes, & Corporations: but the wicked are tho weakning and vndoing of all. Scornfull men (saith he, Pro. 27. 8.) set a City on fire; but the wise turne away wrath. To this purpose, most excellent is that saying of Eliphas in Iob, cap. 22. 30. The innocent shal deliuer the Iland; & it shall be preserued by the purenes of their hands. We read in the book of the Chronicles, that when the Leuites and the Priests were cast out by Ieroboam, they came to Ierusalem:

and

& all such as set their hearts to seeke the Lord God of Israel came with them. And then afterward it is said, they strengthned the kingdom of Iuda, and made Rehoboam the son of Salomon mightie, 2 Chro. 11. 14. 16. 17. By all these testimonies it is euident, that princes, kingdomes, cities, townes and villages, are fortified by the righteous therein: & for their sakes also great plagues are kept backe. Which thing one of the Heathen did well see into; as appeareth by his words, which are these: When God meaneth well to a Citie, and will doe it good, then hee raiseth vp good men: but when hee meaneth to punish a City or a Country, and doe ill vnto it, then he taketh away the good men from it.

Phil. It is very manifest, by all that you haue alledged, that the wicked fare the better euery day in the yeare, for the righteous that dwell amongst them.

Theol. All experience doth teach it: and the Scriptures doe plentifully auouch it. For did not churlish Laban fare the better for Iacob his kinsman? Doth he not acknowledge, that the Lord had blessed him for his sake? Did not Potiphar fare the better for godly Ioseph? Doth not the Scripture say, that the Lord blessed the Egyptians house for Ioseph his sake? and that the Lord made all that hee did to prosper in his hand? Did not Obed-Edom fare the better for

Gen. 30. 27.

Gen. 39. 5.

2 Sam. 6. 1.

the

the Arke? Did not the seuenty and fiue soules that were in the ship with Paul, spéed all the better for his sake? Act. 27.24. Did not the Angel of God tell him in the night, that God had giuen vnto him all that sailed with him? for otherwise, a thousand to one, they had bée n all drowned. Therefore the children of God may very fitly be compared to a great péece of corke, which though it be cast into the sea hauing many nailes fastned in it, yet it beareth them all vp from sinking, which otherwise would sinke of themselues. What shal we say then, or what shal we conclude, but that the vngodly are more beholden to the righteous than they are aware of?

Phil. I doe thinke if it were not for Gods children, it would goe hard with the wicked. For if they were sorted and shoaled out from amongst them and placed by themselues, what could they looke for, but wrath vpon wrath & plague vpon plague, till the Lord had made a finall consumption of them, and swept them like dung from the face of the earth?

Theol. Sure it is, all creatures would frown vpon them. The Sunne would vnwillingly shine vpon them, or the Moone giue them any light. The starres would not be séene of them: and the planets would hide themselues. The beasts would deuoure them: the fowles would picke out their eyes. The fishes would make

war

warre against them: and all creatures in heauen and earth would rise vp in armes against them. Yea, the Lord himselfe from Heauen would raine down fire and brimstone vpon them.

Phil. Yet for all this, it is a wonder to consider how deadly the wicked hate the righteous, and almost in euery thing oppose themselues against them; and that in most virulent and spitefull manner. They raile and slander, scoffe and scorne, mocke and mowe at them, as though they were not worthy to liue vpon the earth. They esteeme euery pelting rascall and preferre euery vile Varlet before them. And though they haue their liues and libertie, their breath and safety, and all that they haue else by them, yet for all that, they could be content to eate their heart with garlicke: so great, so fiery, so burning and hissing hot is their fury and malice against them.

Theol. They may very fitly be compared to a Moth that fretteth in peeces the same cloath wherein shee is bred. Or to a certaine worme or canker, that corrodeth and eateth thorow the heart of the tree that nourisheth her. Or vnto a man that standeth vpon a bow in the toppe of a tree where there is no more: and yet, with an axe choppeth it off, and therewithall falleth down with it, and breaketh his necke. Euen so, the soles of this world doe what they can, to

chop

chop asunder the bough that vpholds them; but they may know easily what will follow.

Phil. I see plainely, they be much their own foes, and stand in their owne light, and indeed know not what they do. For the benefit which they receiue by such, is exceeding great: and therefore by their maligning of them, they do but hold the stirrup to their own destruction.

Theol. Now to apply these things to our selues, and to returne to the first question of this argument: may we not maruell, that our Nation is so long spared, considering that the sins thereof are so horrible and outragious as they be?

Phil. We may iustly maruell at the wonderfull patience of God. And we may well thinke that there bee some in the land, which stand in the breach: being in no small fauour with his Highnesse, sith they doe much preuaile.

Theol. The mercifull preseruation of our most gracious King (who is the breath of our nostrils) the long continuance of our peace, and of the Gospel; the keeping back of the sword out of the land, which our sins pull vpon vs; the frustrating of many plots and subtill deuices which haue been often inuented against our State, yea, and the life of his Maiesties most royall person: make mee to thinke, that there bee some strong pleaders with God, for the publique good of vs all.

Phil.

Phil. You may well thinke ſo indeed: For by our ſinnes we haue forfeited (and daily doe forfeit into Gods hands) both our King, our Country, our Peace, our Goſpel, our liues, our goods, our lands, our liuings, our wiues, our children, and all that wee haue: but onely the righteous (which are ſo neare about the King, and in ſo high fauour) doe ſtep in and earneſtly intreat for vs, that the forfeitures may be releaſed, and that we may haue a leaſe (in parley) of them all againe: or at leaſt a grant of further time. But I pray you Sir, are not we to attribute ſomething concerning our good eſtate to the policie of the land, the lawes eſtabliſhed, and the wiſedome and counſell of our prudent Gouernours?

Theol. Yes assuredly, very much: as the ordinary and outward meanes which God vseth for our safety. For though the Apostle Paul had a grant from God for the safety of his own life & all that were with him in the ship; yet he said, Act. 28.31. Except the marriners abide in the ſhip, we cannot be ſafe. Shewing thereby, that vnto faith & prayers, the best & wisest meanes must be ioyned. We are therefore vpon our knées euery day, to giue thankes vnto God for such good meanes of our safety as he hath giuen vs.

Phil. Well then, as the prayers of the righteous haue beene hitherto great meanes

both

both for the hindring and turning away of wrath, and the continuance of fauour; so shew, I pray you, what is the best course to bee taken, and what in sound wisedome is to be done, both to preuent future dangers, and to continue Gods fauours and mercies still vpon vs.

Theol. The best and surest course, that I can consider or conceiue of, is, to repent heartily for sinnes past, and to reforme our liues in time to come, to seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call vpon him while he is neere, to forsake our own waies, and our own imaginations, and to turne vnto him with all our hearts, with weeping, with fasting, and with mourning, as the Prophet Ioel, cap. 2. aduiseth: For our God is gracious and mercifull, slow to anger, and of great kindnesse, and repenteth him of the euill. All the Prophets doe counsell vs to follow this course, and doe plainely teach, that if wee all (from the highest to the lowest) doe meete the Lord with vnfained repentance, and offer him the sacrifice of a contrite spirit, vndoubtedly he will bee pacified toward vs, and bee merciful to our transgressions: This is, most plainely set downe in the seuenth of Ieremie, where the Lord saith thus to his people: If you amend and redresse your waies, and your workes: If you execute iudgement betwixt a man and his neighbour, and oppresse not the

Ier. 7.

stranger

ſtranger, the fatherleſſe, and the widow, & ſhed no innocent bloud in this place, neither walke after other gods, to your deſtruction; then wil I let you dwell in this place, euen in the Land wch I gaue vnto your Fathers, for euer & euer. So likewise he ſaith by the ſame Prophet, Ier. 22.5. Execute yee indgement and righteouſneſſe, and deliuer the oppreſſed from the hand of the oppreſſor, and vexe not the Fatherleſſe, the Widow, or the Strangers: doe no violence, nor ſhed innocent bloud in this place. For, if you doe this thing, then ſhall the King, ſitting vpon the Throne of Dauid, enter in by the gates of this houſe, and ride vpon chariots, and vpon horſes, both he and his ſeruants, and his people. And again, Ier. 3.22. O ye diſobedient children, returne, and I will heale your rebellion. The Lord alſo ſaith by his Prophet Eſay, cap. 1.19. If ye conſent and obey, ye ſhall eate the good things of the Land: but if ye refuſe, and be rebellious, ye ſhall be deuoured with the ſword. For, the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it. The Prophet Hoſea ſaith, cap. 6.1. Come, let vs returne to the Lord: for, hee hath ſpoyled, and hee will heale vs: hee hath wounded vs, and hee will binde vs vp. And again, Hoſ. 13.1. O Iſrael, returne vnto the Lord (for thou haſt fallen by thine iniquitie) and I will heale thy rebellion, and will loue thee freely:

for, mine anger is turned away from thee, I will be as the dew vnto Israel: he shall grow as the Lilly, and fasten his roote as the tree of Lebanon: his branches shall spreade, and his beauty shall be as the Oliue tree, and his smell as Lebanon.

The Prophet Micah telleth vs what is good for vs, and what is our best course, and what the Lord requireth at our hands namely, these foure things, To do iustly, to loue mercy, to humble our selues, and to walke with our God, Micah 6.8. The Prophet Amos giueth the same counsell, Amos 5.34. saying, Seek the Lord, and ye shall liue. Seek good, and not euill. Hate the euill, and loue the good, and establish iudgement in the gate. It may bee, that the Lord of Hosts wil be mercifull vnto the remnant of Ioseph. And the Lord himselfe saith, If this Nation, against whom I haue pronounced, turne from their wickednesse, I will repent of the plague I thought to bring vpon them, Ier.18.8. Thus wee doe plainely see, what aduice and counsell the Prophets and holy men of God doe giue vnto vs. The summe of all is this, that if we doe truely repent and turne vnto him with all our hearts (studying to obey him, and walke in his wayes) then hee will grant vs any fauour that we will require at his hands. For, euen as a wooll-pack, or other soft matter, beateth

teth backe, and dampeth the force of all shotte: so penitent, melting, and soft hearts doe beate backe the shot of Gods wrath, and turne away his vengeance from vs. Moreouer, wee may obserue in all experience, that when Potentates are offended, or any great man hath conceiued a displeasure against some poore man, then hee must runne and ride, send Presents, vse his friends, breake his sleepe, and neuer bee quiet vntill he haue pacified him: Euen so must wee deale with our God, seeing hee hath taken a displeasure against vs. O therefore that we would speedily vse all possible meanes to pacifie his wrath! Oh that we would with one heart and voyce, euery one of vs (from the highest to the lowest) humble our selues before our God, forsake our former euill wayes, be grieued for that we haue done, and purpose neuer to doe the like againe! Oh that it might goe to the hearts of vs, that we haue so often and so grieuously offended so louing a God, and so mercifull a Father! Oh that we would awake once at last, and rouse vp our drowsie hearts, & ransack our sleepie consciences, crying out against our sins, that our sins might neuer cry out against vs! Oh that wee would iudge our selues, accuse our selues, endite our selues, and condemne our selues! so should wee neuer bee adiudged, accused, endited, or condemned of the Lord. Oh that all hearts

might sobbe, all soules might sigh, all loynes might bee smitten with sorrow, all faces gather blacknesse, and euery man smite himselfe on the thigh, saying; What haue I done? Oh, that both Magistracie, Ministrie, and Commonalty, would purpose and vow, and euen take a bond of themselues, that from henceforth, and from this day forward, they would set their hearts to seeke the Lord; and that they would wholly giue vp themselues to his obedience! Oh that all men, women and children, would feare God, and keepe his Commandements; would eschew euill, and doe good; would study to please God in all things, and to be fruitfull in all good workes; making conscience to performe the duties of their generall callings, and duties of their speciall callings; duties of the first Table, and duties of the second Table: that so God might bee sincerely worshipped, his Name truely reuerenced, his Sabbaths religiously obserued; and that euery man would deale kindely, mercifully, iustly and vprightly with his neighbour; that there might bee no complaining, no crying in our streets! Oh, I say againe and againe, that if all of vs, of what estate, degree, or condition soeuer, would walke in the paths of our God, then doubtlesse wee should liue and see good dayes, all future dangers should be preuented, our peace prolonged, our state esta-

blished,

bliſhed, our King preſerued, and the Goſpel continued. Then ſhould wee ſtill enioy our liues, our goods, our lands, our liuings, our wiues, our children, our houſes and tenements, our orchards and gardens: yea, as the Prophet ſaith, we ſhall eate the good things of the Land, ſpend our dates in much comfort, peace and tranquillitie, and leaue great bleſſings vnto our children and poſteritie, from age to age, from generation to generation.

Phil. You haue fully anſwered my queſtion, and well ſatisfied mee therein out of the Scriptures: Yet, I pray you, giue mee leaue to adde one thing to that which you haue at large ſet down. The Lord ſaith by the Prophet *Amos*, that for their ſinnes and rebellions, hee had giuen them cleanenesse of teeth, that is, dearth and ſcarcitie: and yet they did not turne vnto him. Alſo hee with-held the raine from them, and puniſhed them with drought, and yet they did not turne vnto him. Moreouer, hee ſmote their Corne, their great Gardens, their Orchards, Vineyards, Fig-trees, and Oliue-trees, with blaſting and mildeaw; and the Palmer-worme did deuoure them: and yet they did not returne vnto him. Laſt of all, hee ſmote them with peſtilence, and with the ſword, and ouerthrew them, as hee ouerthrew Sodome and Gomorrah; and they

were as a fire-brand pluckt out of the burning: yet, for all this, they did not turn vnto him. Ye haue not turned vnto me, saith the Lord, Amos 4.6,7. But now to come to the point. Out of this I gather, that if we multiply our transgressions, God will multiply his plagues vpon vs: but on the contrary, if wee would vnfainedly turne vnto the Lord our God with all our hearts, all plagues shall bee stayed, all dangers preuented, and no euill should fall vpon vs. For, because they would not turne, therefore hee smote them. If therefore they had turned, hee would not haue smote them. But now, I pray you, briefly conclude this point, and declare in few words, what it is that doth most materially concerne our peace, and publike good.

Theol. These few then briefly I take to bee the things which belong to our peace.

o. things oncerning our eace.

Let Salomon execute Ioab and Shemei.

Let Achab and Eliah slay the Priests and Prophets of Baal.

Let Aaron and Eleazar minister before the Lord faithfully.

Let Ionas be cast out of the ship.

Let Moses stand fast in the gap, and not let down his hand.

Let Iosuah succeed him.

Let

Let Cornelius feare God with all his house-hold.

Let Tabitha bee full of good workes and almes-deeds.

Let Deborah iudge long in Israel, prosper, and be victorious.

Let vs pray, that the light of Israel may not be quenched.

And this I take to be the summe of all that belongs to our peace.

Phil. The summe of all our conference hitherto, as I remember, may bee reduced vnto these few heads: First, mans naturall corruption hath been laid open. Secondly, the horrible fruits thereof. Thirdly, their euill effects and workings both against our soules and bodies, goods, name, and the whole Land. Lastly, the remedies of all. Now therefore I would grow to some conclusion of that which you touched by the way, and made some mention of; namely, the signes of saluation and damnation: and declare vnto vs plainely, whether the state of a mans soule before God, may not by certaine signes and tokens bee certainely discerned in this life.

Theol. Besides those which before haue been mentioned, wee may adde these nine following.

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nes of
ound
ile.

Reuerence of Gods Name.
Keeping of his Sabbaths.
Truth.
Sobriety.
Industry.
Compassion.
Humility.
Chastity.
Contentation.

Phil. These indeed, I grant, are very good signes: but yet all of them are not certain. For some of them may be in the reprobates.

Pet. 1. 6, 7.

Theol. What say you then to S. Peters signes, set down in the first chapter of his second Epistle: which are these eight:

Peters
ght
gnes of
luation.
Pet. 1. 8.

Faith.
Vertue.
Knowledge.
Temperance.
Patience.
Godlinesse.
Brotherly kindnesse.
Loue.

Saint Peter saith, If these bee in vs, and abound, they will make vs neither idle, nor vnfruitfull in the knowledge of our Lord Iesus.

Which

Which is as much as if hee had said, They will make vs sound and sincere Professors of the Gospel.

Phil. All these, I grant, are exceeding good signes and euidences of a mans saluation: but yet some of them may deceiue, and an hole may be picked in some of these Euidences. I would therefore heare of some such demonstratiue and infallible Euidences, as no Lawyer can finde fault with. For, I hold that good Diuines can as perfectly iudge of the assurances and euidences of mens saluation, as the best Lawyer can iudge of the assurances and euidences, whereby men hold their lands and liuings.

Theol. **You haue spoken truly in that. And would to God all the Lords people would bring forth the Euidences of their saluation, that wee might discerne of them.**

Phil. Set downe then, which bee the most certaine and infallible Euidences of a mans saluation: against which, no exception can be taken.

Theol. **I iudge these to be most sound and infallible.**

Seuen infallible signes of saluation.

Assured faith in the promises. Act. 16.31
Sincerite of heart. Pro. 11.20
The Spirit of adoption. Ioh. 1.41.

Sound

Ro.8.14 Ioh.4.1. 1 Thes. 4.5. Ro.5.1. Col.1.23 Mat.24. 13.

Sound Regeneration and Sanctification.
Inward peace.
Groundednesse in the truth.
Continuance to the end.

Phil. Now you come neer the quick indeed. For, in my iudgement, none of these can bee found truely in any reprobate. Therefore I thinke no Diuine can take exception against any of these.

Theol. No, I assure you: no more than a Lawyer can finde fault with the Tenure of mens lands and fee-simples, when-as both the title is good, and strong by law; and the euidences thereof are sealed, subscribed, delinered, conuated, and sufficient witnes vpon the same, and all other signes and ceremonies (in the delinering, and taking possession thereof) according to strict law obserued. For, if a man haue these fore-named euidences of his saluation, sure it is, his title and interest to heauen is good, by the Law of Moses and the Prophets; I meane the word of God. God himselfe subscribeth to them: Iesus Christ delinereth them as his own Deed: the holy Ghost sealeth vnto them: yea, the three great witnesses, which beare record in the earth (that is, water, blood, and the spirit) doe all witnesse the same.

Phil. Now you haue very fully satisfied me

touch-

touching this point. And one thing more I doe gather out of all your speech; to wit, that you doe think a man may be assured of his saluation euen in this life.

Theol. I doe thinke so indéede. For, he that knoweth not in this life that hee shall bee saued, shall neuer be saued after this life. For, S. Iohn saith, Now we are made the sons of God. 1 Iohn 3.2.

Phil. But because many doubt of this, and the Papists doe altogether deny it; therefore, I pray you, confirm it vnto vs out of the Scriptures.

Theol. The Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 5.1. We know, that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle be destroyed, we haue a building giuen vs of God; that is, an house not made with hands, but eternall in the heauens. Mark, that he saith, both he, and the rest of Gods people, did certainly know, that Heauen was prouided for them. For, the spirit of adoption beareth witnesse with our spirits, that wée are the children of God, Rom. 8. 15, 16. And againe, the same Apostle saith, 2 Tim. 4.8. From henceforth is laid vp for mee the crown of righteousnes: which the Lord, the righteous iudge, shall giue me at that day; not to me only, but to all them that loue his appearing. Here we sée, that hee knew there was a crowne prepared for him, and for the Elect. And the same Spirit which did assure it vnto

Paul,

Paul doth assure it also to all the children of God. For, they haue all the same Spirit, though not in the same measure. Saint Iohn saith also, 1 Ioh. 2. 3. Herein we are sure we know him, if we keep his commandements. In which words S. Iohn telleth vs thus much, that if we do vnfainedly endeauour to obey God, there is in vs the true knowledge & feare of God: and consequently we are sure we shalbe saued. S. Peter saith, 2 Pet. 1. 10. Giue all diligence to make your calling and election sure. Wherefore should the Apostle exhort vs to make our election sure, if none could be sure of it? In the second of the Ephesians, the Apostle saith flatly, that in Christ Iesus wee doe already sit together in heauenly places. His meaning is not, that we are there already in possession; but we are as sure of it, as if we were there already. The reasons hereof are these: Christ our head is in possession: Therefore he will draw all his members vnto him, as he himselfe saith.

Secondly, we are as sure of the thing which we hope for, as of that which we haue: but we are sure of that which wee haue, which is the worke of grace; therefore we are sure of that we looke for, which is the crowne of glory. Many other places of the holy Scriptures might be alledged to this purpose: but, I suppose, these may suffice.

Ioh. 12. 32.

Ioh. 14. 13.

Phil.

Phil. As you haue shewed this by the Scriptures: so also shew it more plainely by euident reason out of the same.

Theol How can a man in truth call God his Father (when he saith, Our Father which art in heauen) and yet doubt whether he is his Father or no? For, if God indeed be our Father, and wee his children, how can we perish? how can we be damned? Will a Father condemn his own children? shall the children of God be condemned? No, no: There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Iesus, Rom. 8. 1. And, Who can lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? It is God that iustifieth, who can condemne? Rom. 8. 33. 34. It is therefore most certain & sure, that all such as do in truth call God their Father, and haue God for their Father, shal be saued. Again, How can a man say, in truth and feeling, that he beleeues the forgiuenesse of sins, and yet doubt whether he shall be saued? For, if he bee fully perswaded that his sins bee forginen, what letteth why he should not be saued? Moreouer, as certainely as we know we are called, iustified and sanctified: so certainely wee know we shall bee glorified. But we know the one certainely, and therefore the other.

Asin. I will neuer beleeue, that any man can certainely know, in this world, whether hee shall bee saued or damned: but all men must

must hope well, and be of a good beleeſe.

Theol. Nay, we muſt goe further than hope well: Wée may not venture our ſaluation vpon vncertaine hopes. As if a man ſhould hope it would be a faire day to morrow; but hee cannot certainely tell. No, no: Wée muſt in this caſe, béeing of ſuch infinite importance as it is, grow to ſome certainety and full reſolution. Wée ſée, worldly men will be loth to hold their lands and leaſes vncertainely, hauing nothing to ſhew for them. They will not ſtand to the courteſie of their land-lords, nor reſt vpon their good wils. They will not ſtay vpon vncertaine hopes. No, they are wiſer than ſo. For, the children of this world are wiſer in their generation than the children of light, Luke 16. They will bee ſure to haue ſomething to ſhew. They will haue it vnder ſeale. They will not ſtay vpon the words and promiſes of the moſt honeſt men, and beſt land-lords. They cannot be quiet till they haue it in white and blacke, with ſound counſell vpon their Title, and euery way made as ſure vnto them, as any Law of the Land can make it.

Are then the children of this world ſo wiſe in theſe inferiour things, and ſhall not wée bée as wiſe in matters of tenne thouſand times more importance? Are they ſo wiſe for earth, and ſhall not wee bée as wiſe for Heauen? Are they

ſo

so wise for their bodies, and shall not wee bee as wise for our soules? Shall wee hold the state of our immortall inheritance by hope-well; and haue no writings, or euidences, no seale, no witnesses, nor any thing to shew for it. Alas! this is a weak Tenure, a broken Title, a simple hold indeed.

Asum. Yet for all that a man cannot bee certaine.

Theol. Yes: S. Iohn telleth vs, wee may bee certaine. For he saith, 1. Ioh. 4. 13. Hereby wee know we dwell in him, and he in vs, because he hath giuen vs of his Spirit. He saith not, we hope, but we know certainly. For, he that hath the spirit of God, knoweth certainly he hath it; and he that hath faith, knoweth that he hath faith; and he that shall be saued, knoweth he shall be saued. For, God doth not worke so darkely in mens hearts by his Spirit, but that they may easily know whether it bee of him or no, if they would make a due triall. Again, the same Apostle saith, 1 Iohn 5. 16. He that beleeueth in the Sonne of God, hath the witnesse in himselfe. That is, he hath certain testimonies in his own conscience, that he shall be saued. For, wee must fetch the warrant of our saluation from within our selues; euen from the work of God within vs. For look how much a man feeleth in himselfe the increase of knowledge, obedience and godlinesse,

so

so much the more sure he is that he shall be saued. A mans owne conscience is of great force this way, and will not lye, or deceiue. For so saith the wise man, Pro.27.19. As water sheweth face to face; so doth the heart, man vnto man. That is, the minde and conscience of euery man telleth him iustly (though not perfectly) what he is. For, the conscience will not lye; but accuse or excuse a man, being in stead of a thousand witnesses.

The Apostle also saith, 1 Cor.2.11. No man knows the things of man, but the spirit of man that is in him. And againe the Scripture saith, Pro.20.29. Mans soule is as it were the candle of the Lord: whereby hee searcheth all the bowels of the belly. So then, it is a clear case, that a man must haue recourse to the worke of Gods grace within him, euen in his own soule: & thereby he shall be certainly resolued one way or another. For euen as Rebecca knew certainly, by the striuing and stirring of the twins in her wombe, that she was conceiued & quick of childe: so Gods children know certainly, by the motions and stirring of the holy Ghost within them, that they haue conceiued Christ, and shall vndoubtedly be saued.

Phil. I pray you let vs come to the groundworke of this certainety of saluation, and speak somewhat of that.

Theol. The ground worke of our saluation is laid in Gods eternall election; & in respect therof, it standeth fast and vnmoueable; as it is written, 2 Tim.2.16. The foundation of God standeth fast. And again, 1 Thes.5.24. He is faithfull that hath promised: Though we cannot beleeue, yet he abides faithfull, 2 Tim. 2.13. So then, as we know it certainely in our selues, by the consequence of election: so it standeth most firm in respect of God, & his eternall & immutable decree. And a thousand infirmities (nay, all the sins of the world, nor all the diuels in hel) cannot ouerthrow Gods election. For, our Lord Iesus saith, Ioh.6.34. All that the Father hath giuen me, shal come vnto me. And again, Ioh.6.39. This is the Fathers will that hath sent mee, that of all wch he hath giuen me, I should lose nothing; but should raise it vp again at the last day. And in another place our Sauiour Christ saith, Ioh.10.27. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, & they follow me, & I giue vnto them eternall life, & they shall neuer perish: neither shal any plucke them out of my hand. My Father, which gaue them me, is greater than all: and none is able to take them out of my Fathers hand. We ought therefore to be as sure of our saluation, as of any other thing which God hath promised, or which wee are bound to beleeue. For, to doubt therof, in respect of Gods truth, is blasphe-

mous against the immutabilitie of his truth.

Phil. But are there not some doubts, at some times, euen in the very Elect, and in those which are growne to the greatest perswasion?

Theol. Yes verily. For he that neuer doubted, neuer beléeues. For whosoeuer beléeueth in truth, féeleth sometimes doubtings and wauerings. Euen as the sound body féeleth many grudgings of diseases, which if he had not health, he could not féele: so the sound soule féeleth some doubtings, which if it were not sound, it could not so easily féele. For, we féele not corruption by corruption, but we féele corruption by grace. And the more grace wée haue, the more quicke wée are in the fœling of corruption. Some men of tender skinnes and quick féeling, will easily féele the lightest feather, in softest manner laid vpon the ball of their heads; which others of more slow féeling and hard flesh, cannot so easily discerne. So then it is certaine, that although the children of GOD féele some doubtings at some times, yet the same doe no whit impeach the certainety of their saluation: but rather argue a perfect soundnesse and health of their soules. For, when such little grudgings are felt in the soule, the children of GOD oppose against them the certainety of GODS truth and promises, and so be easi-

easily ouercome them. For, the Lords people néed no more to feare them, than hée that rides through the streets vpon a lusty Gelding with his sword by his side, néedeth to feare the barking and bauling of a few little curs and whappets.

Phil. Shew yet more plainely, how or in what respect the child of God may both haue doubtings, and yet be fully assured.

Theol. Euen as a man set on the top of the highest steeple in the world, and so fast bound vnto it, that hée cannot fall though hée would: yet when hee looketh downeward, hée feareth, because mans nature is not acquainted nor accustomed to mount so high in the ayre, and to behold the earth so farre beneath: but when hée looketh vpward, and perceiueth himselfe fast bound, and out of all danger, then hee casteth away all care: Euen so, when wee looke downeward to our selues, wée haue doubts and feares: but when wee looke vpward to Christ, and the truth of his promises, wee feele our selues cocke-sure, and cease to doubt any more.

Phil. Declare vnto vs what is the originall of these doubts and feares, and from whence they spring in the children of God.

Theol. They spring from the imperfection of our regeneration, and from that strife which

is in the very minde of the elect, betweene faith and infidelitie. For, these two doe mightily fight together in the most regenerate, and striue to ouer-master and ouer-shadow one another. By reason thereof, sometimes it commeth to passe, through the preuailing of vnbeléefe, that the most excellent seruants of God may fall into fits and pangs of despaire, as Iob and Dauid in their temptations did. And euen in these dayes also, some of Gods children at sometimes are shrewdly handled this way, and brought very low, euen vnto deaths dore: but yet the Lord in great mercie doth recouer them, both from totall and finall despaire. Onely they are humbled and tryed by these sharp fittes for a time, and that for their great good. For, as wée vse to say, that an ague in a young man is a signe of health: so these burning fits of temptations in the elect, for the most part, are signes of Gods grace and fauour. For, if they were not of God, the Diuel would neuer bée so busie with them.

Phil. Is it not meer presumption, and an ouermuch trusting to our selues, to bee perswaded of our saluation?

Theol. Nothing lesse. For, the ground of this perswasion is not laid in our selues, or any thing within vs, or without vs; but onely in the righteousnesse of Christ, and the merciful

promises of God. For, is it any presumption for vs to beleeue that which God hath promised, Christ hath purchased, and the holy Ghost hath sealed? No verily, it is not any presumption; but a thing which we all stand bound vnto, as wee will answer it at the dreadfull day of iudgement. As for our selues, wee do freely confesse, that in Gods sight we are but lumpes of sinne, and masses of miserie, and cannot of our selues moue hand or foote to the furtherance of our saluation. But, being iustified by faith, we are at peace with God, and fully persuaded of his loue and fauour towards vs, in Christ.

Phil. Cannot the reprobates and vngodly bee assured of their saluation?

Theol. No. For, the Prophet saith, Esay 57. 22. There is no peace to the wicked. Then I reason thus: They which haue not the inward peace cannot be assured: But the wicked haue not the inward peace; Therefore they cannot be assured. Stedfast faith in the promises doth assure: But the wicked haue not stedfast faith in the promises; Therefore they cannot be assured. The Spirit of adoption doth assure: But the wicked haue not the Spirit of adoption; Therefore they cannot be assured.

To conclude: when a man feeleth in himselfe an euill conscience, blindenesse, prophanenesse,

and disobedience, he shall in despite of his heart sing this dolefull song: I know not whether I shall be saued or damned.

Phil. Is not the doctrine of the assurance of saluation a most comfortable doctrine?

Theol. Yes doubtlesse. For except a man be perswaded of the fauour of God, and the forgiuenesse of sins, and consequently of his saluation, what comfort can he haue in any thing? Besides this, the perswasion of Gods loue towards vs, is the root of all our loue and cheerefull obedience towardes him. For, therefore wee loue him and obey him, because wee know hee hath loued vs first, and written our names in the Booke of life. But, on the contrary, that generall doctrine of the Papists, which would haue men alwayes doubt and feare in a seruile sort, is most hellish and vncomfortable. For, so long as a man holds that, what encouragement can hee haue to serue God? what loue to his Maiestie? what hope in the promises? what comfort in trouble? what patience in aduersitie?

Antil. Touching this point I am flat of your minde. For, I thinke verily a man ought to bee perswaded of his saluation: and for mine owne part I make no question of it. I hope to be saued as well as the best of them all. I am out of feare for that. For, I haue such a

stedfast

ſtedfaſt faith in God, that if there ſhould bee but two in the world ſaued, I hope I ſhould be one of them.

Theol. You are very confident indeede. You are perſwaded before you know. I would your ground were as good as your vaine confidence. But who is ſo bold as blinde Bayard? Your hope is but fancie, and as a ſicke mans dreame. You hope you cannot tell what. You haue no ground for that you ſay. For, what hope can you haue to bee ſaued, when you walke in no path of ſaluation? What hope can a man haue to come to London ſpeedily, that traueleth nothing that way, but quite contrary? What hope can a man haue to reape a good crop of corne, that vſeth no meanes, neyther plowe-eth, ſoweth, nor harroweth? What hope can a man haue to be fat and well liking of his body, that ſeldome or neuer eateth any meate? What hope can a man haue to eſcape drowning, which leapeth into the Sea? Euen ſo, what hope can you haue to be ſaued, when you walke nothing that way, when you vſe no meanes, when you doe all things that are contrarie to the ſame? For (alas!) there is nothing in you of thoſe things, which the Scriptures doe affirme muſt bee in all thoſe that ſhall bee ſaued. There be none of the forenamed ſignes and tokens in you. You are ignorant, profane and

careleſſe. God is not worſhipped vnder your roſe. There is no true feare of God in your ſelf, nor in your houſhold. You ſeldome heare the word preached. You content your ſelfe with an ignorant Miniſter. You haue no prayers in your familie, no reading, no ſinging of pſalmes, no inſtructions, exhortations, or admonitions, or any other Chriſtian exercises. You make no conſcience of the obſeruation of the Sabbaths: you vſe not the name of God with any reuerence: you break-out ſomtimes into horrible oaths and curſings: you make an ordinary matter of ſwearing by your faith and your troth. Your wife is irreligious; your children, diſſolute and vngracious; your ſeruants, profane and careleſſe. You are an example in your owne houſe of all Atheiſme, and conſcienceleſſe behauiour. You are a great gameſter, a riotour, a ſpend-ſhift, a drinker, a common ale-houſe hunter, a whore-hunter; and, to conclude, giuen to all vice and naughtineſſe. Now then, I pray you, tell me, or rather let your conſcience tell me, What hope can you haue to be ſaued, ſo long as you walke and continue in this courſe? Doth not S. Iohn ſay, 1 Iohn 1.6. If we ſay we haue fellowſhip with him, and walke in darknes, we are liers? Doth not the ſame Apoſtle auouch, that ſuch as ſay they know God, and keepe not his commandements, are lyars? 1 Iohn 3.4.

Again,

Againe, doth he not say, 1 Iohn 3.18. He that committeth sin, is of the Diuell; **And,** Whosoeuer doth not righteousnesse, is not of God? **Doth not our Lord Iesus flatly tell the Iewes (which bragged that** Abraham **was their father) that they were of their father the Diuel, because they did his works? Doth not ye Apostle** Paul **say,** Rom.6.16. His seruants we are to whom we obey, whether it be of sin vnto death, or of obedience vnto righteousnes? **Doth not the Scripture say,** Ioh.3.7. He that doth righteousnes is righteous? **Doth not our Lord Iesus affirm, that** Not euery one that saith, Lord, Lord, shal enter into the kingdom of heauen; but he that doth the wil of my father wch is in heauen, Mat.7.21. **Therfore I conclude, that, for as much as your whole course is carnall, careless and dissolute, you can haue no warrantable hope to be saued.**

Phil. I doe verily thinke, that this mans case (which now you haue laid open) is the case of thousands.

Theol. **Yea doubtlesse, of thousand thousands, the more is the pitie.**

Asun. Soft and fair, Sir, you are very round indeed. Soft fire maketh sweet mault. I hope, you know we must be saued by mercy, & not by merit. If I could do all my selfe, wherfore serueth Christ? I hope, that which I cannot doe, hee will doe for me. And I hope to bee saued by

by Iesus Christ, as well as the best of you all.

Theol. Oh, now I see which way the game goeth. You would faine make Christ a cloke for your sins. You will sin that grace may abound. You will sinne frankly, and set all vpon Christs score. Truely there be many thousands of your minde: which hearing of Gods abundant mercy in Christ, are thereby made more bold to sinne. But they shall know one day, to their cost, what it is to abuse the mercie of God. The Apostle saith, Rom. 2.4. The mercy & louing kindnes of God should lead vs to repentance. But we see, it leads many to further hardnesse of heart. The Prophet saith, Psal. 130.4. With him is mercy that he may be feared. But many thereby are made more secure and careless. But to come neerer the mark: you say you hope to be saued by Iesus Christ. I answer: If those things be found in you, which the Scriptures auouch to be in all that shall bee saued by him, then you may haue good confidence, and assured hope; otherwise not. Now the Scriptures doe thus determine it, and set it downe: that If a man be in Christ, and look to be saued by him, he must be endued with these qualities following:

9. things required of all that shal be saued by christ.

First, hee must be a new Creature, 2 Cor. 5.17.
Secondly, hee must liue, not after the lusts of men, but after the will of God, 1 Pet. 4.2.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, hee must bee zealous of good workes, Tit.2.14.

Fourthly, hee must dye to sin, and liue to righteousnesse, Rom.6.14.

Fiftly, he must be holy & vnblameable, Col.1.23.

Sixtly, he must so walke as Christ hath walked, 1 Iohn 2.6.

Seuenly, hee must crucifie the flesh, with the affections and lusts, Gal. 5.24.

Eightly, he must walke, not after the flesh, but after the spirit, Rom.8.1.

Last of all, he must serue God in righteousnes & true holines all the daies of his life, Luk.1.75.

Loe then what things are required of all that shall be saued by Christ. Now therefore if these things be in you in some measure of truth, then your hope is currant, sound and good: otherwise it is nothing worth. For in vain do men say, they hope to be saued by Christ, when-as they walke dissolutely. The reason hereof is, because the members must be suitable to the head. But Christ our head is holy: therefore we his members must be holy also; as it is written, 1 Pet.1.15. Be yee holy, for I am holy. Otherwise, if we will ioyne prophane and vngodly members to our holy head Christ, then wee make Christ a monster: As if a man should ioyne vnto the head of a Lion, the necke of a Beare, the body of a Wolfe, and the legges of a Foxe: were it not a monstrous

thing &

thing? would it not make a monstrous creature? Euen such a thing do they go about, which would haue swearers, drunkards, whoremongers, and such like, to bee the members of Christ, and to haue life and saluation by him. But sith you doe so much presume on Christ, I pray you let mee aske you a question.

Antil. What is that?

Theol. How doe you know that Christ dyed for you particularly, and by name?

Antil. Christ died for men, & therfore for me.

Theol. But all men shall not bee saued by Christ. How therefore do you know that you are one of them that haue speciall interest in Christ, and shall be saued by his death?

Antil. This I know, We are all sinners, and cannot be saued by any other than by Christ.

Theol. Answer directly to my question. How do you know in your selfe, and for your self, that you are one of the elect, and one of those for whom Christ dyed?

Antil. I know it by my good faith in God, because I put my whole trust in him, and in none other.

Theol. But how know you that you haue faith? or how shall a man know his faith?

Antil. I know it by this, that I haue alwaies had as good a meaning, and as good a faith to Godward, as any man of my calling, & that is

not

not book-learned. I haue alwayes feared God with all my heart, and serued him with my prayers.

Theol. Tush: now you go about the bush, and houer in the aye: answer me to the point. How do you know certainly and assuredly, that Christ dyed for you particularly and by name?

Antil. You would make a man mad. You put mee out of my faith: you driue mee from Christ. But if you goe about to driue me from Christ, I will neuer beleeue you. For, I know we must be saued only by him.

Theol. I go not about to driue you from Christ, but to driue you to Christ. For, how can I driue you from Christ, seeing you neuer came néer him? How can I driue you out of Christ, seeing you were neuer in him? But this is it that deceiueth you and many others, that you think you beléeue in Christ, because you say you beléeue in Christ: as though faith consisted in words; or as though a man had faith, because he saith so. If euerie one that saith he hath faith, therefore hath faith, and euery one that saith hee beléeueth in Christ, doth therefore beléeue; then who will not haue faith? who will not beléeue? But in very déed, your faith, and the faith of many others, is nothing else but méere imagination. But all this while you haue not answered my question touching your particular knowledge of Christ.

Antil.

Antil. I can answer you no otherwise than I haue answerd you. And I think I haue answered you sufficiently.

Theol. No, no: you faulter in your speech: your answer is not worth a button: you speake you wot not what: you are altogether befogged and benighted in this question. But if there were in your heart the true knowledge and liuely feeling of God, then I am sure you would haue yelded another and a better answer: then you would haue spoken somthing from the sense and feeling of your owne heart, and from the work of Gods grace within you. But because you can yeld no sound reason that Christ dyed for you particularly and by name, therefore I suspect you are none of them which haue proper interest in him, and in whom his death takes effect indeed.

Phil. I think this question would grauell a great number: and few there bee that can answer it aright.

Theol. It is most certaine. I know it by lamentable experience, that not one of an hundred can soundly and sufficiently answer this question; none indeed, but onely those in whom the new worke is wrought, and doe by the inward worke of the Spirit feele Christ to be theirs. I haue talked with some, which are both wittie, sensible, & learned: who notwithstanding,

then

when they haue been brought to this very point and issue, haue stuck sore at it, and staggered very much. And howsoeuer they might by wit and learning shuffle it ouer, and in a blundring sort speake reason, yet had they no feeling of that which they said, and therefore no assurance: and consequently as good neuer a whit, as neuer the better. It is the sanctifying Spirit, that giueth feeling in this point: and therefore without the feeling of the operation of the same spirit, it can neuer be soundly answered. Thus then, I doe close vp this whole matter: As the Vine-branch cannot liue and bring forth fruit, except it abide in the vine: no more can wee, except we abide in Christ, and be truly grafted in him by a liuely faith. None can haue any benefit by him, but they onely which dwell in him. None can liue by Christ, but they which are changed into Christ: None are partakers of his body, but they which are in his body: None can be saued by Christ crucified, but they which are crucified with Christ: None can liue with him being dead, but those which dye with him being aliue. Therefore let vs root downward in mortification, that we may shoot vpward in sanctification: let vs dye to sinne, that we may liue to righteousnesse: Let vs dye while we are aliue, that we may liue when we are dead.

Assu. If none can bee saued by Christ, but onely

only these which are so qualified as you speake of, then Lord haue mercy vpon vs : then the way to heauen is very strait indeed, and few at all shall be saued. For, there be few such in the world.

Theol. **You are no whit therein deceiued. For when all comes to all, it is most certain, that few shall bee saued. Which thing I will shew vnto you both by Scripture, reason and examples.**

Asun. First then let vs heare it proued by the Scriptures.

Theol. **Our Lord Jesus saith,** Mat. 7. 10, Enter in at the strait gate. For, it is the wide gate and broad way that leads to destruction; and many there be which go in there-at: because the gate is strait, and the way narrow, that leadeth vnto life, & few there be that find it. **Again he saith,** Mat. 20. 16. Many are called; but few are chosen. **In another place we read of a certain man which came to our Sauiour Christ, and asked him of purpose, whether few should be saued. To whom our Lord Jesus answered thus:** Striue to enter in at the strait gate. For, many (I say vnto you) will seek to enter in, & shal not be able, Luk. 13. 14. **In which answer, albeit our Sauiour doth not answer directly to his question, either negatiuely or affirmatiuely, yet doth he plainly insinuate by his speeches, that few shalbe saued. For, first he bids vs striue earnestly, noting thereby,**

that

that it is a matter of great strife against the World, the Flesh, and the Diuell. Secondly, he affirmeth, that the gate is very strait; noting, that none can enter in, without vehement crowding, and almost breaking their shoulderbones. Lastly, he saith, that Many which seek to enter in, shall not be able; noting thereby, that euen of them that seek, many shall step short, because they seke him not aright. Esaias also saith, Esay 1.9. Except the Lord of Hosts had left vs a seed, we had been as Sodome; and had been like to Gomorrah. The Apostle also alledgeth out of the Prophet, that The Lord will make a short account in the earth, and gather it into a short summe with righteousnesse. These Scriptures, I thinke, are sufficient to proue, that few shall be saued.

Esay 10. 22. Rom 9. 28.

Asun. Now let vs heare your reasons.

Theol. If wee come to reason, wee may rather wonder that any should be saued, than that few shall bee saued. For, wee haue all the lets and hinderances that may bee, both within vs, and without vs. Wee haue (as they say) the Sunne, Moone, and seuen Starres against vs. Wee haue all the Diuels in hell against vs, with all their hornes, heads, marueilous strength, infinite wiles, cunning deuices, deepe sleights, and methodicall temptations. Here runnes a fare streame against vs. Then haue

wée this present euill world against vs, with her innumerable baits, snares, netts, gins and grins, to catch vs, fetter vs, and entangle vs. Héere wée haue profits and pleasures, riches and honour, wealth and preferment, ambition and couetousnesse. Héere comes-in a Camp-royall of spirituall and inuisible enemies. Lastly, we haue our flesh, that is, our corrupted nature against vs: wée haue our selues against our selues. For, wee our selues are as great enemies to our saluation, as eyther the World, or the Diuell. For, our vnderstanding, reason, will and affections, are altogether against vs. Our naturall wisedome is an enemie vnto vs. Our concupiscences and lusts doe minister strength to Sathans temptations. They are all in leagne with Sathan against vs. They take part with him in euery thing against vs and our saluation. They fight all vnder his standard, and receiue their pay of him. This then goeth hard on our side, that the Diuell hath an inward part against vs: and wée carry alwaies within vs our greatest enemie, which is euer ready, day and night, to betray vs into the hands of Satan; yea, to vnbolt the doore, and let him in to cut our throats. Héere then wée see an huge armie of dreadfull enemies, and a verie legion of Diuels, lying in ambush against our soules. Are not we therefore poore wretches in a

most

most pitifull case, which are thus betrayed and besieged on euery side? All things then considered, may wee not iustly marueil, that any shall be saued? For, who seeth not, who knoweth not, that thousand thousands are carryed headlong to destruction, eyther with the temptations of the World, the Flesh, or the Diuell? But yet further I will shew by another very manifest and apparent reason, that the number of Gods Elect vpon the face of the earth, are very few in comparison; which may thus bee considered: First, let there bee taken away from amongst vs all Papists, Atheists, and Heretickes. Secondly, let there bee shoaled out all vicious and notorious euill-liuers; as, Swearers, Drunkards, Whoremongers, Worldlings, Deceiuers, Coseners, Proud men, Rioters, Gamesters, and all the Prophane multitude. Thirdly, let there bee refused and sorted out all Hypocrites, carnall Protestants, vaine Professors, Back-sliders, Deceiuers, and colde Christians. Let all these, I say, bee separated: and then tell mee, how many sound, sincere, faithfull, and zealous Worshippers of God will bee found amongst vs. I suppose wee should not neede the Art of Arithmeticke to number them. For, I thinke there would bee very few in euery Village, Towne, and Citie: I doubt they would walke very

thinly in the stréets; so as a man might easily tell them as they go. Our Lord Iesus asks a question in the Gospel of S. Luke, saying, Doe you thinke, when the Son of man commeth, that he shall finde faith on the earth? Luke 18.8. To which we may answer, Surely, very little.

Asun. Now, according to your promise, shew this thing also by examples.

Theol. In the first age of the world, all flesh had so corrupted their wayes, that God could no longer beare them; but euen vowed their destruction, by the ouer-flowing of waters. When the Flood came, how few were found faithfull? Eight persons onely were saued by the Arke. How few righteous were found in Sodome, and the Cities adioyning? but one pur Lot and his family. How few beléeuers were found in Iericho? But one Rahab. How few of the
Heb. 3. 19. olde Israelites entred into the Land of Promise? But two, Caleb and Iosuah. The rest could not enter in, because of their vnbeléefe. The true and inuisible Church was small, during the gouernement of the Iudges, as appeareth plentifully in that Booke. In Eliahs time, the Church was so small, that it did not appeare.
1 King. 17. In the raigne of the Kings of Israel and Iudah, the sincere worshippers were very few, as appeareth by all the Prophets. During the captiuitie, the Church was as the Moone vnder a

cloud;

cloud, she was driuen into the wilderness, where she hid her selfe. During the persecutions of the Greek Empire by Gog, Magog and Egypt, they were fewest of all. In Christs time, what a silly company did hee begin withall! How were all things corrupted by the Priests, Scribes & Pharisees! In the beginning of the Apostles preaching, there were few beleeuers. After the first six hundred yeares, what an Eclipse was in the Church, during the height of Antichrists raigne! How few true worshippers of God were in the world, for the space almost of 7. hundred years! Since the Gospell was broached and spread abroad, how few do beléeue! And, as the Prophet saith, Lord, who hath beleeued our report! Esay 53.1. Thus then you sée, it is apparent (both by Scripture, reason, and examples of all ages) that the number of the Elect is very smal: and, when all comes to all, few shal be saued.

Phil. I pray you tell vs how few, and to what scantling they may be reduced; whether one of an hundred, or one of a thousand, shall be saued.

Theol. No man knowes that, neither can I giue you any direct and certaine answer vnto it. But, I say, that in comparison of the Reprobate, there shall but a few be saued. For, all that professe the Gospell, are not the true Church, before God. There bee many in the Church,

which are not of the Church.

Phil. How doe you proue that?

Theol. Out of the ninth to the Romans: where the Apostle saith, All are not Israel that are of Israel, Rom. 9. 6. And again, Esay cryeth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel were as the sand of the Sea, yet but a remnant shall be saued, Rom. 9. 27.

Phil. How doe you balance it in the visible Church? or in what comparison doe you take it? let vs heare some estimate of it. Some think one of a hundred; some, but one of a thousand shall be saued.

Theol. Indeed I haue heard some learned and godly Diuines giue such coniectures: but for that matter, I can say nothing to it. But onely
Rom. 9. 27 let vs obserue the comparison of the holy Ghost betwixt a remnant and the sand of the Sea, and it will giue some light into the matter.

Phil. Doth not the knowledge of this doctrine discourage men from seeking after God?

Theol. Nothing lesse. But rather it ought to awake vs, and stir vp in vs a greater care of our saluation, that wee may bee in the number of
Phil. 2. 12. Christs little flocke, which make an end of their saluation in feare and trembling.

Phil. Some make light of all these matters. Others say, As for the life to come, that is the least

least matter of an hundred to be cared for. As for that matter, they will leaue it to God; euen as pleaseth him: they will not meddle with it. For they say, God that made them must saue them. They hope they shall do as wel as others, and make as good shift as their neighbours.

Theol. **It is lamentable, that men should be so careleſſe, and make so light of that which (of all other things) is most weighty and important.** For, what shal it profit a man, though he should win the whole world, if he lose his soule? **as the author of all wisedome testifieth,** Mat. 16. 26.

Asun. I pray you, Sir, vnder correction, giue me leaue to speake my mind in this point. I am an ignorant man: pardon me if I speak amisse. For, A fooles bolt is soone shot.

Theol. **Say on.**

Asun. I doe verily think that God is stronger than the Diuell. Therefore I cannot beleeue that he will suffer the Diuel to haue more than himselfe. He will not take it at his hands. Hee loueth mankinde better than so.

Theol. **You do carnally imagine, that God will wrestle and striue with the diuel about the matter. As for Gods power it doth neuer crosse his will: for God can doe nothing against his will and decrée, because he will not.**

Asun. Yea, but the Scripture saith, God will haue all men saued.

Theol. That is not meant of euery particular man, but of all sorts some; Some Iewes, some Gentiles, some rich, some poore, some high, some low. &c.

Asun. Christ dyed for all: therefore all shall be saued.

Theol. Christ dyed for all in sufficiencie of his death, but not in efficacie vnto life. For, only the Elect shall be saued by his death; As it is written, Luke 22.20. This is my bloud in the new Testament, which is giuen for you; meaning his Disciples & chosen children. And again, Heb. 5. 9. Christ being consecrated, is made the Author of saluation to all that obey him.

Asun. God is merciful, and therfore I hope he will saue the greatest part for his mercy sake.

Theol. The greatest part shall perish: but all that shall be saued, shall be saued by his mercy. As it is written, Rom. 9. He will haue mercy on whom he will haue mercy; and whom he will he hardneth. And again, Rom. 9. It is not in him that willeth, or in him that runneth; but in God that sheweth mercy. Therefore though God be infinite in mercie, and Christ infinite in merit, yet none shall haue mercy, but onely the vessels of mercie.

Antil. Can you tell who shall be saued, and who shall be damned? Do you know Gods secrets? When were you in heauen? When

spake

ſpake you with God ? I am of the minde that all men ſhall bee ſaued. For, Gods mercy is aboue all his works. Say you what you will, and what you can, God did not make vs to condemne vs.

Theol. You are very peremptory indéed: you are more bold than wiſe: for, Chriſt ſaith, Few ſhall be ſaued: you ſay: All ſhall be ſaued. Whether then ſhall we beleeue Chriſt, or you?

Antil. If there ſhould come two ſoules, one from heauen, and another from hell, and bring vs certaine newes how the caſe ſtood, then I would beleeue it indeed.

Theol. Put caſe two ſoules of the dead ſhould come, the one from heauen, the other from hell: I can tell you aforehand certainely what they would ſay, and what newes they would bring.

Antil. What, I pray you?

Theol. They would ſay there bee few in heauen, and many in hell: heauen is empty, and hell is full.

Antil. How know you that ? how know you they would ſay ſo?

Theol. I am ſure, if they ſpeak the truth, they muſt néeds ſay ſo.

Antil. Muſt they needs? Why, I pray you, muſt they needs?

Theol. Becauſe the word of God ſaith ſo. Becauſe Moſes and the Prophets ſay ſo. If

you will not beléeue Moses and the Prophets, neyther will you beléeue, though one, though two, though an hundred, should rise from the dead.

Antil. Yes but I would.

Theol. I pray you let me aske you a question, Whether doe you think that God and his Word, or the seules of dead men, are more to bee credited?

Antil. If I were sure that God said so, then I would beleeue it.

Theol. If his word say so, doth not he say so? Is not he and his word all one?

Antil. Yet for all that, if I might hear God himselfe speake it, it would moue me much.

Theol. You shew your selfe to bee a notable Infidell. You will not beléeue Gods word without signes, and miracles, and wonders from the dead.

Antil. You speake as though you knew certainely that hell is full: you doe but speake at random: you cannot tell: you were neuer there to see. But, for mine owne part, I beleeue there is no hell at all, but onely the hell of a mans conscience.

Theol. Now you shew your selfe in kind what you are. You say you beléeue no hell at all. And I think, if you were well examined, you beléeue no heauen at all, neither God nor diuell.

Antil.

Antil. Yes: I beleeue there is an heauen, because I see it with mine eyes.

Theol. You will beléeue no more belike than you sée: but blessed is he that beléeueth, and séeth not, Iohn 20.29. You are one of the rankest Atheists that euer I talked withall.

Antil. You ought not to iudge: you know not mens hearts.

Theol. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. You haue sufficiently bewrayed your heart by your words: For, the tongue is the key of the minde. As for iudging, I iudge you onely by your fruits: which is lawfull. For, wée may iustly say, It is a bad tree which bringeth forth bad fruit: and he that doth wickedly, is a wicked man. But it is you, and such as you are, that will take vpon you to iudge mens hearts. For, though a mans outward actions bée religious and honest, yet you will condemne him: And if a man giue himselfe to the word and prayer, reforme his familie, and abstaine from the grosse sinnes of the world, you will by and by say, He is an hypocrite. And thus you take vpon you to iudge mens hearts, as though you knew with what affection these things are done.

Antil I confesse I am a sinner: and so are all other for ought I know. There is no man but he may bee amended. I pray God send vs

all

all of his grace, that we may please him, and get to heauen at last.

Theol. Now you would shuffle vp all together, as though you were as good as the best, and as though there were no difference of sinners: but you must learn to know that there is a great difference of sinners. For, there is the penitent, and the vnpenitent sinner; the carefull, and the carelesse sinner; the sinner whose sinnes are not imputed, and the sinner whose sinnes are imputed; the sinner that shall be saued, and the sinner that shall be damned. For, it is one thing to sin of frailty; another thing to liue in it, dwell in it, and trade in it, and (as the holy Ghost speaketh, Esay 5.18.) to suck it in, as the fish sucketh water, and to draw it vnto vs with cart-ropes and cords of vanity.

To conclude therefore, there is as great difference betwixt a sinner and a sinner, as betwixt light and darknesse. For, though Gods children be sinners in respect of the remnants of sin within them, yet the Scriptures call them iust and righteous, because they are iustified by Christ, and sanctified by his grace and holy spirit. And for this cause it is that S. Iohn saith, He that is borne of God, sinneth not, 1 Iohn 4.6.

Antil. What, I pray you, did you neuer sin?

Theol. Yes: and what then? what are you the better?

Antil.

Antil. You Preachers cannot agree among your ſelues. One ſaith one thing, and another ſaith another thing: ſo that you bring the ignorant people into a mammering; and they know not on which hand to take.

Theol. **The Preachers, God bee thanked, agree very well together in all the maine grounds of Religion, and principall points of ſaluation. But if they diſſent in ſome other matters, you are to try the ſpirits, whether they be of God or no. You muſt try all things, and keep that which is good.**

Antil. How can plaine and ſimple men try the ſpirits and doctrines of the Preachers?

Theol. **Yes. For the Apoſtle ſaith,** 1 Cor. 2. 15. The ſpiritual man diſcerneth all things. **And S.** Iohn **ſaith to the holy Chriſtians,** 1 Iohn 2. 26. You haue receiued an ointment from that holy one, and know all things; that is, all things neceſſary to ſaluation. **Thoſe therefore which haue the ſpirit of God, can iudge & diſcern of doctrines, whether they be of God or no.**

Antil. I am not book-learned, and therfore I cannot iudge of ſuch matters. As for hearing of ſermons, I haue no leaſure to go to them: I haue ſomewhat elſe to doe. Let them that are bookiſh, and heare ſo many ſermons, iudge of ſuch matters: For, I wil not meddle with them: they belong not vnto me.

Theol.

Theol. Yet for all that, you ought to read the Scriptures, and hear the word of God preached, that you may bee able to discerne betwixt truth and falshood in matters of Religion.

Antil. Belike you thinke none can be saued without preaching, and that all men stand bound to frequent Sermons: but I am not of your minde in that.

Theol. Our Lord Iesus saith, Ioh. 10. 2. My sheep heare my voice. And again he saith, Ioh. 8. 47. He that is of God, heareth Gods word. Ye therfore hear it not, because ye are not of God. You see therefore how Christ Iesus maketh it a speciall note of Gods children, to hear his word preached.

Antil. But I thinke we may serue God well enough without a Preacher. For Preachers are but men, and what can they doe? A Preacher is a good man so long as he is in the pulpit: but if he be out of the Pulpit, he is but as another man.

Theol. You speake contemptuously of Gods messengers, and of Gods sacred ordinance. But the Apostle doth fully answer your obiection, saying, Rom. 10. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God: and how can they hear without a Preacher? In which words the Apostle tels you flatly, that you can neuer haue faith, nor serue God aright, without preaching.

Antil.

Antil. When you haue preached all that you can, you can make the Word of God no better than it is: and some put-in and put-out what they list. The Scriptures are but mens inuentions: and they made the Scriptures.

Theol. We preach, not to make the Word better, but to make you better. As for putting-in and putting-out, it is a mere vntruth. And whereas you say, The Scriptures were made by men, it is blasphemie once to thinke it; and you are worthy to receiue your answer at Tiburne.

Antil. Now I see you are hot. I perceiue, for all your godlinesse you will be angry.

Theol. I take it to be no sin to be angry against sin. For, your sinne is very great: and who can beare it?

Antil. All this while you speak much for preaching: but you say nothing for Prayer. I thinke there is as much need of Prayer as Preaching. For, I finde in the Scriptures, Pray continually, but I finde not Preach continually.

Theol. No man denieth, but that Prayer is most needfull alwaies to be ioyned vnto Preaching and all other holy exercises: for it is ye handmaid to all. But yet we prefer Preaching aboue it, because Preaching is both the directour and the stone of Prayer: yea, it steereth vs aright in

all

all spirituall actions and seruices whatsoeuer: without the which we can keep no certain course, but are euer ready to erre on this hand or that. Now whereas you say, you finde Pray continually, but not Preach continually, you might (if you were not wilfully blinde) finde also Preach continually. For, the Apostle saith to Timothie, 2 Tim. 3. 1. Be instant: Preach the word in season and out of season; that is, alwaies, as time and occasion shall serue.

Antil. You extoll preaching: but you say nothing for reading. I beleeue you condemne reading.

Theol. Doth he that highly commendeth gold, condemn siluer? I do ingenuously confesse, that both publique and priuate reading of the Scriptures, is very necessarie and profitable; and would to God it were more vsed than it is. For, it is of singular vse, both to increase knowledge and iudgement, and also to make vs more fitte to heare the Word preached. For, such men as are altogether ignorant of the Historie of the Bible, can heare the Word with small comfort.

Phil. It seemes that this man neither regards the one nor the other: because, for ought that I can see, he cares not greatly if the Scriptures were burnt.

Antil. Oh Sirrah, you speake very male-

partly

partly: you may speake when you are bidden: Who made you a Iudge? You are one of his Disciples, and that maketh you to speake of his side.

Phil. No, Sir, I hope I am Christs Disciple, and no mans. But assuredly I cannot hold my peace at your vile cauilling, and most blasphemous speeches.

Antil. I cry you mercy, Sir: you seem to be one of these Scripture-men: you are of the spirit: you are so full of it, that it runneth out at your nostrils.

Phil. You doe plainly shew your selfe to be a scoffing Ismaelite.

Antil. And you doe plainly shew your selfe to be one of these folke of God, which know their seates in heauen.

Phil. I pray God be mercifull vnto you, and giue you a better heart. For I see you are in the gall of bitternesse, and in the bond of iniquity.

Antil. You think there is none good but such as your selfe, and such as can please your humour. You wil forsooth be all pure. But by God, there be a company of pure knaues of you.

Theol. Nay, you doe manifestly shew of what spirit you are. For, you both sweare, and raile with one breath.

Antil. God forgiue me. Why did he anger me then? There bee a company of such con-

trollers as hee in the world, that no body can be quiet for them.

Theol. I perceiue, a little thing wil anger you, ſith you will be angry with him for ſpeaking the truth.

Antil. What hath he to doe with me? He is more buſie than needs. Why doth he ſay I am in a bad caſe? I will not come to him to learne my duty. If I haue faults he ſhal not anſwer for them. I ſhall anſwer for mine owne faults: and Euery Fat ſhall ſtand on his owne bottome. Let him meddle with that he hath to doe withall.

Theol. You are too impatient: you take matters at the worſt. We ought friendly, and in loue, to admoniſh one another: for, we muſt haue a care one of anothers ſaluation. I dare ſay for him, that he ſpeakes both of loue and compaſſion towards you.

Antil. I care not for ſuch loue. Let him keep it to himſelfe. What doth he think of me? doth hee ſuppoſe that I haue not a ſoule to ſaue, as well as he; or that I haue no care of my ſaluation? I would hee ſhould know, that I haue as great care for my ſaluation as hee, though I make not ſuch outward ſhewes. For, All is not gold that gliſters. I haue as good a meaning as he, though I cannot vtter it.

Theol. These words might well bee ſpared: I hope you will bee pacified, and amende your life,

life, and draw neere to God hereafter?

Asun. Truely, Sir, you may thinke of mee what you please; but I assure you, I haue more care that way than all the world wonders at: I thank God for it. I say my prayers euery night when I am in my bed. And if good prayers will doe vs no good, God helpe vs. I haue alwaies serued God duly and truly, and had him in my minde. I doe as I would be done to: I keep my Church, and tend my praiers while I am there. And I hope, I am not so bad as this fellow would make me. I am sure, if I be bad, I am not the worst in the world: there be as bad as I: if I goe to hell, I shall haue fellowes, and make as good shift as others.

Theol. You thinke you haue spoken wisely: but I like not your answer. For your words smell strongly, both of ignorance, pride, and vnbeleefe. For first, you iustifie your selfe in your faithlesse and ignorant worship of God. And secondly, you iustifie your selfe, by comparison with others; because others are as bad as you, and you are not the worst in the world.

Antil. Now I know, you speake of ill will: For you neuer had any good opinion of mee.

Theol. I would I could haue as good an opinion of you, as I doe desire, and that I might see that wrought in you, which might

draw my loue and liking towards you. And as for ill will, the Lord knoweth I beare you none. I desire your conuersion and saluation with my whole heart: and I would think my selfe happy, if I might saue your soule with the losse of my right arme.

Antil. I hope I may repent: For, the Scripture saith, At what time soeuer a sinner doth repent, God will haue mercy on him. Therfore if I may haue space and grace, and time to repent before death, and aske God forgiuenesse, and say my prayers, and cry God mercy, I hope I shall doe well enough.

Theol. You speake as though repentance were in your power, and at your commandement, and that you can put it into your owne heart when you list: and that makes you and many others presume of it, three houres before death. But you must know, that repentance is the rare gift of God; and it is giuen but to a few: For, God will know him well that hee bestoweth repentance vpon, sith it is proper only to the Elect. It is no worldly matter. It is not attained with many and frequent prayers, and much hearing, reading, and meditating in the Word of God. It is not so easie a matter to come by, as the world indgeth. It is not found, but of them that seeke it diligently, and begge it earnestly. It is no ordinarie three

houres

houres matter. Cry God mercie a little for fashion, will not doe it. Cursorie saying of a few prayers a little before death, auaileth not. For, though true repentance bee neuer too late, yet late repentance is seldome true. Herein delaies are dangerous: for, the longer we deferre it, the worse is our case. The farther a naile is driuen in with a hammer, the harder it is to get out againe. The longer a disease is let runne, the harder it is to cure. The deeper a tree is rooted, the harder it is to plucke vp againe. The longer we deferre the time of our repentance, the harder it will be to repent: and therefore it is dangerous driuing it off to the last cast. For, an ancient Father saith, We reade but of one that repented at the last, that no man should presume; and yet of one, that none might despaire. *Augustin.*

Well then, to conclude this point, I would haue you to know, that the present time is alwaies the time of repentance: For, time past cannot be recouered, and time to come is vncertaine.

Antil. Sir, in mine opinion you haue vttered some very dangerous things, and such as were enough to driue a man to despaire.

Theol. What be they, I pray you?

Antil. There bee diuers things. But one thing doth most of all sticke in my stomacke:

and that is the ſmall number that ſhall bee ſaued, as you ſay. But I can hardly bee perſwaded that God made ſo many thouſands to caſt them away when he hath done. Doe you think that God hath made vs to condemne vs? Will you make him to be the Author of condemnation?

Theol. Nothing leſſe. For, God is not the cauſe of mens condemnation, but themſelues: For, euery mans deſtruction commeth of himſelfe: as it is written, O Iſrael thy deſtruction is of thy ſelfe, Hoſea 13. As for God, hee doth (in great mercy) vſe all poſſible meanes to ſaue ſoules; as he ſaith by the Prophet, What could I haue done more to my Vineyard that I haue not done vnto it? Eſay 5. 4. But to come neere to your queſtion: I deny that God hath created the moſt part of men onely and ſolely vnto perdition, as the proper end which he did ayme at in creating them: but hee hath created all things for the praiſe of his glory; as it is written, Hee hath created all things for himſelfe, and the wicked alſo for the euill day, Prouerbs 16. 4. Then it followeth, that the cauſe and end why the wicked were created, neither was, nor is the onely deſtruction of his creature, but his owne praiſe and glory; that that only might appeare, and ſhine forth in all his workes. Yet certaine it is, that GOD for iuſt cauſes (albeit vnknown

known and hid to vs) hath reiected a great part of men. The causes, I say, of reprobation are hid in the eternall counsell of God, and known to his godly wisedome onely. They are secret, and hid from vs; reserued in his eternall wisedome, to be reuealed at the glorious appearing of our Lord Iesus. His iudgements (saith the Scripture) are as a great Deepe, and his waies past finding out, Psal. 36. Rom. 11. It is as possible for vs to comprehend the Ocean in a little ditch, as to comprehend the reason of Gods counsell in this behalfe.

Antil. What reason, iustice, or equity is there that Sentence of death should bee passed vpon men before they be borne, and before they haue done good or euill?

Theol. I told you before, that wee can neuer comprehend the reason of Gods proceeding in this behalfe: yet wee must know, that his will is the rule of righteousnesse, and must bee vnto vs in stead of a thousand reasons. For, whatsoeuer God willeth, in as much as hee willeth it, it is to bee holden iust. We cannot conceiue the reason of many naturall things, and things subiect to sense; as, the motion of the celestiall bodies, their inconceiueable swiftnesse, their matter and substance, their magnitude altitude, and latitude. We cannot throughly finde out the causes of the thunder,

lightning, windes, earth-quakes, ebbings and flowings of the sea, and many other things under the Sun: how then can we possibly ascend vp into the priuy Chamber and Councell-house of God, to sift & search out the bottome of Gods secrets; which no wit or reach of man can any way attaine vnto? Let vs therefore learn in Gods feare to reuerence that which wee cannot in this life comprehend.

This one thing I must say vnto you, that whatsoeuer God decreeth, yet doth he execute no man, till he haue ten thousand times deserued it. For, betwixt the decree and the execution thereof, commeth sin in vs, and most iust causes of condemnation.

Antil. If God haue decreed mens destruction, what can they do withall? who can resist his will? why then is he angry with vs? For, all things must needes come to passe according to his decree and determination.

Theol First, I answer you with the Apostle: Rom. 9. 22. O man, who art thou that pleadest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power of the clay, to make of the same lumpe one vessell to honour, and another to dishonour? Moreouer I answer, that Gods decree doth not enforce the will of man, which worketh and moueth of it selfe.

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It hath in it selfe the beginning of euill motion, and sinneth willingly. Therefore, though the decrée of God imposeth a necessity vpon all secondary causes (so as they must néds bée framed and disposed according to the same) yet no coaction or constraint: for, they are all carried with their voluntary motion: Euen as wee sée the plumb of a clocke, béeing the first mouer, doth cause all the other wheeles to moue, but not to moue this way or that way. For, in that they moue, some one way, and some another, it is of themselues; I meane, of their owne frame: So Gods decrée doth moue all secondary causes, but not take away their owne proper motion. For, God is the Author of euery action; but not of any euill in any action. As the soule of man is the originall cause of all motion in man, as the Philosophers dispute, but yet not of lame and impotent motion; for that is from another cause, to wit, some defect in the body: so I say, Gods decrée is the rote and first cause of motion, but not of defective motion: That is from our selues. Likewise, that a bell soundeth, the cause is in him that ringeth it: but that it iarreth, the cause is in it selfe. Againe, that an instrument soundeth, is in him that playeth vpon it: but that it iarreth, is in it selfe; that is, in it owne want of tuning, So then, to shut vp this point, all instruments

and middle causes so moued of God, being the first mouer, that he alwaies doth will holily and iustly in his moving. But the instruments moued are carried in contrary motions, according to their owne nature and feame. If they be good, they are carried to that which is good: but if they be euill, they are carried vnto euill. So that according to the double beginning of motion and will, there is a double and diuers worke and effect.

Antil. But from whence comes it, that man of himselfe, that is, of his owne free motion, doth will that which is euill?

Theol. From the fall of Adam, whereby his will was corrupted.

Antil. What was the cause of Adams fall?

Theol. The Diuell, and the deprauation of his owne will.

Antil. How could his will incline vnto euill, it being made good, and he being made good?

Theol. He and his will were made good, yet mutably good. For, to bee immutably good, is proper only to God And Adam did so stand, that he might fall; as the euent declared.

Antil. Was not the decree of God the cause of Adams fall?

Theol. No: but the voluntary inclination of his will vnto euill. For, Adams will was neither forced, nor by any violence of Gods purpose

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compelled to consent: but hee, of free will and ready minde, left God, and ioyned with the Diuell.

Thus then I do determine, that Adam sinned necessarily, if you respect the decree or euent: but if you respect the first mouer and inherent cause, which was his owne will, then he sinned voluntarily and contingently. For, the decree of God did not take away his will, or the contingency thereof; but only order and dispose it. Therefore (as a learned Writer saith) *Volens peccauit, & proprio motu*, Hee sinned willingly, and of his owne motion. And therefore no euill is to bee attributed vnto God, or his decree. Beza.

Antil. How then doe you conceiue and consider of the purpose of God in all these things?

Theol. Thus: That God decreed with himselfe, *vno actu*, at once,

That there should be a world.
That Adam should be created perfect.
That he should fall of himselfe.
That all should fall with him.
That he would saue some of the lost race.
That he would do it of mercy through his son.
That he would condemne others for sin.

Antil. How doe you proue the decree of reprobation; to wit, that God hath determined the destruction of thousands before the world was?

Theol.

Theol. **The Scripture calleth the reprobates,** The vessels of wrath, prepared to destruction, Rom 9 22. **The Scripture saith,** God hath not appointed vs vnto wrath, 2 Thes. 5. **Therefore it followeth, that some are appointed vnto wrath. The Scripture saith of the Reprobates, that** They were euen ordained to stumble at the word, 1 Pet. 2. 8 **The Scripture saith,** They were of old ordained to this condemnation, Iude 4.

Antil. But how answer you this? God wils not the death of a sinner: therefore hee hath predestinated none to destruction.

Eze. 18.

Theol. **God wils not the death of a sinner simply and absolutely, as it is the destruction of his Creature; but as it is a means to declare his iustice, and to set forth his glory.**

Antil. God did foresee and foreknow, that the wicked would perish through their owne sinne: but yet hee did not predestinate them vnto it.

Theol. **Gods prescience and foreknowledge cannot be separated from his decree. For, whatsoeuer God hath foreseene and foreknown in his eternall counsell, hee hath determined the same shall come to passe. For, as it appertaines to his wisdome to foreknow and foresee all things: so doth it appertaine to his power to moderate and rule all things according to his will.**

Antil. What do you cal prescience in God?

Theol.

Theol. Prescience in God is that wherby all things abide present before his eyes: so that to his eternall knowledge, nothing is past, nothing to come; but all things are alwaies present: and they are so present, that they are not as conceiued imaginations, formes and motions; but all things are alwaies so present before God, that hee doth behold them in their veritie and perfection.

Antil. How can God iustly determine of mens destruction, before they haue sinned?

Theol. This obiection hath beene answered in part before: For, I told you, that God condemneth none but for sinne, eyther originall only, or else both originall and actuall. For, howsoeuer he doth in himselfe, before all time, determine the reprobation of many, yet he proceeds to no execution till there be found in vs both iust deserts & apparent cause. Therefore they deale vnsoundly and foolishly, which confound the decree of reprobation with damnation it selfe: fith sinne is the cause of the one; and onely the will of God, of the other.

Phil. Well, Sir, fith wee are so far proceeded in this question, by the occasion of this mans obiections and cauils, I pray you now as you haue spoken much of reprobation, and the causes thereof; so let vs heare somewhat of election, and the causes thereof: and shew

vs out of the Scriptures, that God hath before all worlds chosen some to eternall life.

Theol. Touching the decrée of election, there are almost none that make any doubt thereof: therefore small proofe shall serue for this point. Onely I will confirme it by one or two testimonies out of holy Scripture. First, the Apostle saith, Ephes.1.3. Blessed bee God, euen the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ, who hath blessed vs with all spirituall blessings in heauenly things in Christ, as hee hath chosen vs in him, before the foundation of the world, that wee should be holy, and without blame before him in loue. You see the words are very plaine and pregnant for this purpose. Another confirmation is taken out of the 8. Chapter to the Romans, in these words: Those whom he knew before, did he also predestinate to bee like to the image of his own Sonne, that he might be the first borne of many brethren.

Phil. Which be the causes of election?

Theol. The causes of election are to be found only in God himselfe. For his eternall Election dependeth neither vpon man, neither yet vpon any thing that is in man, but is purposed in himself, & established in Christ, in whom we are elected. This is fully proued in these words, Ephes.1. 5,6. Who hath predestinated vs to bee adopted through Iesus Christ in himselfe, according

ding to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorie, wherewith he hath made vs freely accepted in his beloued. **Where we see, the Apostle telleth vs, that his free grace, and the good pleasure of his will, are the first motiues or moueing causes of our election.**

Phil. But the Papists fetch the first motiue of election out of mans merits, and foreseene workes. For, say they, God did fore-see who would repent, beleeue, and doe well: and therefore he made choyce of them.

Theol. **But they are greatly deceiued: For I say againe and againe, that there was nothing in vs which did euer moue God to set his loue vpon vs, and to chuse vs vnto life: but hee euer found the originall cause in himself. As it is written,** Rom. 9. He wil haue mercy vpon whom he will haue mercy, and whom hee will he hardneth. **And againe:** It is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth: but in God that sheweth mercie. **The Lord himselfe also testifieth,** (Deut. 7. 7.) **that he did chuse his people, not for any respect in them: but only because he loued them, and bare a speciall fauour vnto them. So then it is a certaine truth, that Gods eternall predestination excludeth all merits of man, and all power of his will, thereby to attaine vnto eternall life: and that his free mercy, and vndeserued fauour, is both the beginning,**

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the midst, and the end of our saluation: that is to say, All is of him, and nothing of our selues.

Phil. Whether then doth faith depend vpon election, or election vpon faith? That is, whether did God chuse vs because we doe beleeue? or whether doe we beleeue because we are chosen?

Theol. Out of all doubt, both faith & all fruits of faith doe depend vpon election. For, therfore we beléeue because we are elected; and not therfore elected because we beléeue. As it is written, So many as were ordained to euerlasting life, beleeued, Acts 13.41.

Anti. If men be predestinate before they be borne, to what purpose serue all precepts, admonitions, lawes? &c. It forceth not how we liue. For, neither our godly or vngodly life can alter the purpose of God.

Theol. This is a very wicked and carnall obiection, and sheweth a vile and dissolute minde in them that vse it. But I would wish such men to consider the end of election; which is, that wee should lead a godly life. As it is plainly set down in the first to the Ephesians, vers. 3. where the Apostle saith, God hath chosen vs before the foundation of the world. But to what end? that we should liue as we list? No, no, saith he; But that we should be holy & vnblameable before him. Again he saith, Rom. 8.16. Wee are predesti-

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nate to be made like the image of his Son, that is, to be holy and righteous. For most certain it is, that we can iudge nothing of predestination, but by the consequents: that is, by our calling, iustification, and sanctification. For when once we feele the worke of grace within vs (that is, that wee are washed by the new birth, and renued by the holy Ghost, finding in our selues an vnfained hatred of sin, and loue of righteousnesse) then are we sure, and out of all doubt, that we are predestinated to life. And it is euen as much, as if God had personally appeared vnto vs, and whispered vs in the eare, and told vs that our names are taken, and written in the book of life. For, whom he hath predestinate, them he hath called: and whom he hath called, them he hath iustified: and whom hee hath iustified, them he hath glorified, Rom. 8. 30. Now therefore, till we feele these marks of election wrought in vs, wee can be at no certainety in this point; neither are we to take any notice of it, or meddle in it: but wee must strine, according to that power and faculties we haue, to liue honestly, and ciuilly, waiting when God will haue mercy on vs, and giue vs the true touch. As for them that are careless and dissolute, setting all at fire and sauen, there is small hope that they are elected, or euer shall be called.

Antil. I thinke the preaching and publishing

of this doctrine of predestination, hath done much hurt: and it had beene good it had neuer beene knowne to the people, but vtterly concealed. For, some it driueth to despaire, and others it maketh more secure and carelesse.

Theol. You art in a great errour: for this Doctrine is part of Gods reuealed Truth, which hee would haue knowne to his people. And in good sooth, it is of very great and comfortable vse to the children of God, against all the assaults of the Diuell, and temptations of desperation whatsoeuer. For when a man hath once in truth felt, by the effects, that God hath chosen him to life: then though the Diuell lye sore at him, and the conscience of sinne and his own frailties doe vehemently assault him; yet hee knoweth certainly, that the eternall purpose and counsell of God, is immutable; and that because his saluation is not grounded vpon himselfe, or his owne strength, but vpon the vnchangeable decree of God, which is a foundation immoueable, and alwayes standing sure and firme; therefore doe the Diuell and sinne what they can, yet he shall be vpheld in righteousnesse and truth, and euen (as it were) borne vp in the armes of God euen to the end. For whom God loueth, to the end he loueth them. Moreouer when once the Lords people perceiue (by their sanctification and new birth) both that the Lord hath re-

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lected and reprobated so many thousand thousands, and made choyce of them to be heires of his most glorious Kingdome, being in themselves of the same mould and making that others are, & that he hath done all this of his free grace and undeserued mercy towards them: oh, how doth it rauish their hearts with the loue of him! Againe, how frankely and cheerefully doe they serue him! How willingly and faithfully doe they obey him! Yea, how are they wholly rapt, and inflamed with the desire of him! For it is the persuasion and feeling of Gods loue towards vs, that draweth vp our loue to him againe; as S. Iohn saith, 1 Ioh. 4. We loue him, because he hath loued vs first.

Moreouer, it is said of Mary Magdalen, that she loued much, because much was forgiuen, Luk. 7. For, after she felt her many and great sins freely pardoned, her affections were kindled with the loue & obedience of Christ. So likewise the Church in the Canticles, Cant. 2. 5. after she had beene in the banqueting house of all spirituall grace, and felt the banner of Christs loue displayed vpon her, forthwith she was rapt therewith, and cryed out (as it were in a swoune) that she was sicke of loue: So againe, Cant. 5. 5. when Christ put in his hand by the hole of the dore (that is, touched the very inward parts of her heart by his spirit) then her heart yearned, and her bowels

were affectioned towards him. This is it which S.Paul prayeth for vpon his knées, that it may be granted to the Ephesians, that they may be able to comprehend with all the Saints, what is the breadth and length, height and depth of Gods loue towards vs, and to know the loue of Christ (which passeth knowledge) and to bee filled with all fulnesse of God. Thus then you sée the great and comfortable vse of this doctrine of election, both in that it ministreth strength and comfort against all temptations, as also because it constraineth vs to loue God, and of very loue to fear him, and obey him.

Ephes.3. 3.19.

Phil. Well Sir, I think now you haue spent time enough in answering the obiections and cauils of *Antilegon*. In all which I doe obserue one thing; that there is no end of cauilling and obiecting against the truth: and that a man may obiect more in an houre, than a learned man can well answer in a day.

Theol. You say truth. And the reason hereof is, because men haue sin in them out of measure, and the spirit of God but in measure. Therefore they can by the one obiect and conceiue more against the truth, than by the other they shall bée able to answer and say for it.

Phil. It appeareth indeed, that errors be infinite, & obiections innumerable, & that there is no end of mens cauilling against Gods sacred truth.

truth. It is good for vs therfore to be thorowly settled in the truth, that wee be not entangled or snared with any cauils, or sophistications whatsoeuer. And I doe verily think (notwithstanding all his obiections, and exceptions) that hee doth in his conscience desire with *Balaam*, to dye the death of the righteous, and to bee as one of them whom hee seemeth to despise.

Theol. **I am so perswaded too. For this is the triumph that vertue hath ouer vice, that where shée is most hated, there she is often desired and wished for. And this is the great punishment that God bringeth vpon the wicked;** *Virtutem vt videant, intabescantque relictâ*, **as saith the Poet;** That they shall see vertue, and pine away, hauing no power to follow it.

Phil. But now let vs returne to the point we were in hand with, before we fell into these obiections and cauils: which was concerning the small number of them which shall bee saued: & as you haue shewed vs many reasons therof, so proceede to speak yet more vnto that point.

Theol. **As I haue shewed you of sundry lets, both within vs and without vs, which doe kéepe vs backe from God, and hold vs fast in our sinnes: So now, vnto all that hath béene said before, I will adde nine great hinderances vnto eternall life, which may not vnfitly bé**

termed nine bars out of heauen, and nine gates into hell.

Phil. Which be they?

Theol. They be these:

Gates to hell.

Infidelitie.
Presumption of Gods mercy.
Examples of the multitude.
Long custome of sinne.
Long escaping of punishment.
Hope of long life.
Conceitednesse.
Ill company.
Euill example of Ministers.

Phil. These indeed bee strong barres out of heauen, aud wide gates into hell. I pray you therefore proue them out of the Scriptures, and lay them forth somewhat more largely.

Theol. The first, which is Infidelity, is proued out of the fourth chapter to the Hebrewes, vers. 2. where it is written: Vnto vs was the Gospell preached, as vnto them: but the word which they heard, profited them not, because it was not mixed with faith in those that heard it. And again, Heb. 3. 19. They could not enter in, because of vnbeleefe. Here we see, that vnbeleefe did bar out the old people from entring into the land of Promise which was a figure of Gods eternall kingdome. And sure it is, that the same vnbeleefe doth barre out thousands of vs. For many

many will beléeue nothing but their own fantasies. They will not beléeue the Word of God: especially when it is contrary to their lusts and likings, profits and pleasures. Though things bee manifestly proued to their faces, and both the Chapter and the Verse shewed them, yet will they not beléeue: or though they say they beléeue, yet will they neuer go about the practice of any thing, but reply against GOD in all their actions. And, for the most part, when GOD saith one thing, they will say another. When GOD saith yea, they will say no: and so giue GOD the lye. Some againe will say, If all be true that the Preachers say, then GOD helpe vs. Thus you se how Infidelitie doth barre men out of heauen, and cast them into hell.

Phil. Let vs heare of the second gate, which is *Presumption of Gods mercy.*

Theol. This is set downe in the 29. of Deuteronomie, where the Lord saith thus: When a man heareth the wordes of this curse, and yet flattereth himselfe in his heart, saying, I shall haue peace, although I walke according to the stubbornenesse of mine own heart, thus adding drunkennesse to thirst, (that is, one sin to another) the Lord will not be mercifull vnto him, but the wrath of the Lord, and his ielousie shall smoake against that man; and euery curse

that is written in this booke, shall light vpon him, and the Lord shall put out his name from vnder heauen.

Here we see how the mighty God doth thunder downe vpon such as goe on in their sins, presuming of his mercy, and saying in their hearts, If I may haue but a Lord haue mercy vpon mee, three houres before death, I care not. But it is iust with God, when those three houres come, to shut them vp in blindenesse, and hardnesse of heart, as a iust plague for their presumption. Therefore the Prophet Dauid, seeing the grieuousnesse of this sin, prayeth to be deliuered from it. Keep me, O Lord (saith he, Psal. 19.) from presumptuous sinnes: let them not raign ouer me. Let all men therefore take heed of presumptuous sins. For though God be full of mercy, yet will he shew no mercy to them that presume of his mercy. But they shall once know to their cost, that iustice goeth from him as well as mercy.

Phil. Let vs come to the third gate, which is the *Example of the multitude.*

Theol This is proued in the 23. of Exodus, verse 22. where the Lord saith flatly; Thou shalt not follow a multitude to doe euill. In another place the Lord saith, Leuit. 18. 3. After the doing of the land of Egypt wherein yee dwelt, shall yee not doe: and after the manner of the land of Canaan, whither I will bring you, shall

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ye not doe, neither walke in their ordinances.

Against this Law did the children of Israel offend, when they said in the stubbornenesse of their heart, to the Prophet Ieremie; The word that thou hast spoken vnto vs in the name of the Lord, we will not heare: but wee will doe whatsoeuer goeth out of our mouth: and wee will doe as we haue done, both we and our Fathers, our Kings, and our Princes, in the Cities of Iudah, & the streets of Ierusalem, Ier. 44. 16.

Note heere, how they doe altogether refuse the word of the Lord, and how they follow the example of the multitude. We see in these our dayes by lamentable experience, how thousands are violently carried downe the streame: and for defence of it some will say, Doe as the most men doe, and the fewest will speake ill of you: Which is a very wicked speech. For if wee will follow the course of the most, we shall haue the reward of the most; which is eternall perdition.

Let vs therefore take heede of bending with the sway; for the sway of the world doth weigh downe all things that can bee spoken out of the word of God, and openeth a very wide passage into hell.

Phil. Proceede to the fourth gate into hell which is the *Long custome of sin.*

Theol. This is noted by the Prophet Ieremy

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to be a very dangerous thing. For he saith, Ier. 13.23. Can the blacke-moore change his skin? or the Leopard his spots? Then may ye also doe good, which are accustomed to doe euill: noting thereby, that it is as hard a matter to leaue an old custome of sinne, as to wash a Blacke-moore white, or to change the spots of a Leopard: which because they are naturall, is most impossible. So when men through custome haue made swearing, lying, adultery, and drunkennesse (as it were) naturall vnto them, oh how hard it is to leaue them! For custome maketh another nature, and taketh away all sense and feeling of sinne.

Phil. Let vs heare of the fift gate, which is the *Long escaping of punishment.*

Theol. This is touched by the Wise man in these words: Because sentence against an euill worke is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the children of men are set in them to doe euill, Eccl. 8.11. Where he sheweth, that one cause why men are so hardened in their sins, is, because God winketh at them, and letteth them alone, not punishing them immediately after they haue sinned. For if God should forthwith strike downe one, and raine fire and brimstone vpon another, and cause the earth to swallow vp the third, then men would feare indeed. But it hath been shewed before, that GOD

taketh

taketh not that course: but though he meet with some in this life, yet hee lets thousands escape: and that makes them more bold, thinking they shal neuer come to their answer: Euen as an old thée which hath a long time escaped both prison and gallowes, thinks he shall alwayes so escape, and therefore goeth boldly on in his thefts. But let men take héede. For as the Proueerbe saith, Though the Pitcher goeth long to the Well, yet at last it commeth broken home: So, though men escape long, yet they shall not escape alwayes: for there will come a day of reckoning, a day that will pay it home for all. Thus you sée how impunity leadeth numbers to destruction. That is, when men are let alone, and neither smitten by the hand of God, nor punished by the Law of the Magistrate.

Phil. Let vs come to the sixt gate: which is the *Hope of long life.*

Theol. This is affirmed by our Lord Iesus concerning that rich worldling, who, when he felt the world come in vpon him with full streame, said he would pull downe his barnes, and builde greater, and say to his soule; Soule, thou hast much goods laid vp for many yeares: Liue at ease, eate, drink, and take thy pastime, Luke 12. 19. But our Sauiour calleth him fole, for flattering himselfe in security, and promising vnto himselfe long life. Moreouer, hée plainely told

him

him, that the same night hee should make a hellish and miserable end. Note, I pray you, how Iesus Christ, the fountaine of all Wisedome, calleth this man a fole, and yeeldeth a reason thereof: to wit, because hee gathered riches to himselfe: and was not rich in God; he had great care of this life, and none at all for that which is to come. So then it followeth, that all such are right foles indeede, and may bee chronicled for foles, (how wise soeuer they bee taken and reputed in the world) which haue much care for their bodies, and none for their soules; great care for this life, and little for that which is to come. Well, let all such prophane worldlings as dreame and dote of long life, (and therefore deferre the day of their repentance and conuersion vnto God) take heede by this mans example, that they reckon not without their host, and bee suddenly snatcht away in the midst of all their pleasures and iollities; as Iob saith, Iob 21. 13. Some dye in their full strength, being in all ease and prosperity: Their beastes run full of milke, and their bones run full of marrow. We see therefore how dangerous a thing it is for men to flatter and soth vp themselues with hope of long life.

Phil. Proceede to the seuenth gate, which is *Conceitednesse*.

Theol. This is indeede a very broad gate into

to hell. For the Scripture saith, Pro. 26.12. Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit. There is more hope of a foole than of such a one. And again, Pro. 26.16 The foole is wiser in his owne eies, than seuen men that can giue a sensible reason. The holy Ghost, we see, affirmeth, that such as are puft vp with an ouerweening of their owne gifts, are farthest of all other from the Kingdom of heauen. For they despise the wisedom of God to their own destruction. They hold scorne to be taught: They will say they know as much as all the Preachers can tell them. For what can all the Preachers say more than this; Wee are all sinners: we must be saued by Christ: we must doe as we would be done to? There is no more, but do well, and haue well, &c. Alas poor soules, they looke aloft: they are desperately houen vp with conceitednesse: not knowing that they are poore, naked, blind, and miserable. Reu. 3. 17.

These men trust altogether to their owne wit, learning, policie, riches, and great reputation in the World. And because all men crouch to them, and clap their hands at them, therefore they swell like Turkie-Cocks, set vp their feathers, and draw their wings vpon the ground with a kinde of sauffe and disdaine of all men; as if they were the onely wights of the world. Moreouer, when men doe praise them for their naturall gifts, swhe them, and applaud them,

then

then is it a wonder to see how they streak themselues; as though they would forthwith take their flight, and mount vnto the clowdes. But let all insolent and conceited men hearken vnto the woe that is pronounced against them by the eternall King of glory, saying, Esay 5. 21. Woe vnto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight. Again, let them hearken to the counsell of God, which saith, Trust vnto the Lord with all thy heart, but leane not vnto thine own wisedome. Be not wise in thine owne eyes: but feare God, and depart from euill, Pro. 3.5. These silly conceited soles thinke, that because they haue the cast of this life, and can cunningly compasse the things of this world, and go through stitch with them, therefore they can compasse heauen also by their fine wits, and deep deuices. But alas, poor wretches, they are greatly and grossely deceiued. For the wisedome of the world is foolishnesse with God, & he catcheth the wise in their own craftinesse, 1 Cor. 3.19. And againe the Lord saith, I will destroy the wisedome of the wise, & will cast away the vnderstanding of the prudent, 1 Cor. 1.19. Let not these men therefore stand too much in their own light: let them not trust to their owne policies. For they are all but as an ice of one nights freezing, which will deceiue them that trust vnto it. Let them therefore become soles in themselues,

that

that God may make them wise. Let them deny themselues, that God may acknowledge them. Let them bee humbled in themselues, that God may exalt them. For assuredly, there is no vse after this life, of the most exquisite wisedome of flesh: it all endeth when we end. For how dieth the wise man? Euen as dyeth the fole, saith the holy Ghost. And where all worldly wisedome endeth, there all heauenly wisedome beginneth. Eccl. 2. 16. Thus therefore wee see, what a wide gate into Hell, Conceitednesse is, and how many enter in thereat.

Phil. Now let vs vnderstand of the eighth gate into hell: which is *Ill company*.

Theol. The spirit of God foreseeing the great danger of this, and knowing how ready wee are to bee carried away with ill company, doth giue vs most earnest warning to take heede of it, as a most dangerous thing. Enter not (saith he, Pro. 4.14.) in the way of the wicked: and walk not in the way of euill men. Auoid it, goe not by it, turne from it, and passe by. The reason hereof is yelded in another place: where it is said, A companion of fooles shall be made worse, Pro. 13. 20. Let men therefore take heede of ill company. For many thereby haue beene brought to the gallowes, and haue confessed vpon the ladder, that ill company hath brought them vnto it: and therefore haue admonished

all

all by their example, to take héed, and beware of lewd company. Moreouer the Scripture saith, Pro. 28. 19. He that followeth vain companions, shall be filled with pouerty. And againe in the same Chapter, He that keepeth company with banqueters, shameth his father. Let vs therefore say with Dauid, Psal. 119. 63. I am a companion of all them that fear God, aud keep his cõmandements. And on ẖ contrary, let vs say with him, Psal. 26. I haue not haunted with vain persons, neither kept company with the dissemblers. I hate the assembly of the euill, and haue not accompanied with the wicked. Let vs therfore by Dauids example, shun the company of the wicked: For, as a man is, so is his company. It is the surest note to discerne a man by. For as all vnlike things are vnsociable, so all like things are sociable. Herein let vs beware wee deceiue not our selues with vaine words, and an opinion of our own strength; as if wee were as strong as Christ, and could not be drawn away with any company. No, no: we are more apt to be drawn, than to draw, to be drawn to euill by others, than to draw others to good: therefore God saith by his Prophet, Ier. 15. 16. Let them returne vnto thee, but returne not thou vnto them. Vndoubtedly hee is an odde man, that is not made worse with ill company. For can a man touch pitch, and not bee defiled therewith? Can a man

carry

carry coales in his bosome; and not be burnt? Daily and lamentable experience sheweth, that many of them which thinke themselues strong, are this way most grieuously smatted. Let a man thinke therefore hee neuer abandoneth euill, till hee abandon ill company. For no good is concluded in this Parliament. For ill company is the suburbs of Hell. Furthermore, it is to bee obserued, that some vpon admonitions, and some inward compunctions of their owne conscience, doe leaue their sins vntill they haue new prouocations, and vntill they come amongst their old copesmates and sinne-companions: and then are they carryed backagaine to their old bypas, and returne to their folly, as a dog returneth to his vomit. For wee see some, which otherwise are of good natures and dispositions, Pro. 26. 11
most pitifully and violently carryed away with ill company. For euen as greene wood of it selfe is vnapt to burne, yet being laid on the fire with a great deals of seare wood, it burneth as fast as the rest: So, many toward youthes, which of themselues are not so prone vnto euill as others: yet with this violent streame and blustring tempest of ill company, are carried cleane away.

Phil. Let vs come to the last gate: which is the *Euill examples of Ministers.*

Theal. It grieueth me, and I am almost asha-

med to speake of this point: for is it not a woefull and lamentable thing, that any such should bée found amongst the sonnes of Leui? Is it not a corsey, that the Ministers of Christ should bée of a scandalous conuersation? For if the eye be darke, how great is the darknesse? If they be examples of all euill to the flocke, which should be patternes, lights, and examples of all goodnesse, must it not néds strengthen the hands of the wicked, so as they cannot returne from their wickednesse? But this is an old disease and euill sicknesse, which hath alwayes bén in the Church: The Prophet Ieremy doth most gréeuously complaine of it in his time, & saith, Ier. 23. 24. That from the Prophets of Ierusalem, is wickednes gone forth into all the land. For, both the prophet and the priest do wickedly. I haue seene, saith he, in the Prophets of Ierusalem filthinesse, They commit adultery, and walke in lies: they strengthen also the hands of the wicked, that none can returne from his wickenes: they are all vnto me as Sodom: & the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrha. And in the ninth verse of the same Chapter he sheweth, that it was no pleasure or ioy vnto him, so publikely to reprowe them: but that he did it with exceding griefe, as bæing forced thereunto, both in regard of Gods glorie, and the good of the Church. His words are these, Mine heart breaketh within me

because

because of the Prophets, and all my bones shake. Moreouer, in the same Chapter is set downe, how the Lord would feede them with wormewood, and make them drinke the water of gall, and sundry other wayes plague them, for their flatteries, seducements, corrupt doctrine, and euill example of life.

Phil. Most certaine it is, that the euill example of Ministers, and especially of Preachers, is very dangerous and offensiue: for thereby thousands are hardened in their sinnes. For men will say, Such a Minister, and such a Preacher doth thus, and thus, and therefore why may not wee doe so too? They are learned, and know the Word of God: therefore, if it were euill, I hope they would not doe it. For they should bee lights to vs, and giue vs good examples. Therefore sith they doe such things wee cannot tell what to thinke, or what to say to the matter: they bring such simple folke as we are into a mammering.

Theol. Oh that I could with the Prophet Ieremie, quake and shake to thinke of these matters! Oh that I could mourne as a Doue, in penning of it! Oh that I had in the wilderness a cottage, and could with Iob bee a brother to the Dragons, and a companion to the Ostriches, whilst I haue any thoughts of these things! Oh that I could weepe and mourne without sin, before I yeilde you an answer! For weepe in-

deed I may: but answer, I cannot. Alas (with much griefe I speake it) all is too true that you say. And herein the people haue a vantage against vs: If I may call it vantage. But let this be my answer: If the blinde leade the blinde, both shall fall into the ditch, Mat. 15.14. blinde guides and blinde people shall perish together. If because we are wicked, they will bee more wicked, then both they and wee shall burne in hell fire together. Then let them reckon their gaines, and see what they haue got. They haue small cause to triumph ouer vs. For, thereby their market is neuer a whit amended. Let them take this for answer. And let vs that are the Ministers of Christ, and Preachers of the Gospell, looke narrowly to our selues, and make straight steps to our feet. For if wee tread neuer so little awry, wee may see how many eyes are vpon vs. Let vs therefore with Dauid pray continually, Order my goings, O Lord, that my foot steps slip not: For when my foot slipped they reioyced against me. And as for the people let them follow the examples of those, which walke vnblameably (as God bee thanked some such there be) and let them flye the examples of such as are offensiue. So shall God haue more glory, and they more peace in their owne hearts. Thus haue wee heard, what a wide gate is opened into Hell, by the euill example of Ministers,

sters, and especially of Preachers.

Phil. Well: sith there be so many bars out of heauen, and so many gates into hell, it is a very hard matter to breake thorow all these bars, and so to enter into life: and as hard a matter to misse all these gates, and to escape hell. He quits him well that can doe it.

Theol. True indeede. And as hard a thing as that is, so hard a thing is it for flesh and blood to enter into the Kingdome of heauen. And yet most men make light of it, and thinke it is the easiest matter of a hundred.

Asun. As hard as it is, yet I hope by the grace of God, I shal be one of them that shall enter in. For so long as I doe as I would bee done to, and say no body no harme, nor doe no body no harme, God will haue mercy on my soule. And I doubt not, but my good deeds shall weigh against my euill deeds, and that I shal make euen with God at my later end. For I thanke God for it, I haue alwaies liued in his feare, & serued him with a true intent. Therfore I know that so long as I keepe his commandements, and liue as my neighbours doe, and as a Christian man ought to doe, he will not damne my soule.

Theol. Can you then keepe Gods commandements?

Asun. As neere as God will giue mee grace.

Theol. Nay, but I aske you whether you keep them, or no?

Asun. I do assay to keepe them as neer as I can: I do my true intent. Though I keep them not all; yet I am sure I keep some of them.

Theol. Because you say you keepe some of them, I pray you let me be so bold with you as to examine you in the particulars. You know the first commandement is this, Thou shalt haue none other Gods in my sight. Now say you, do you keep this?

Asun. I am out of all feare of it. For I neuer worshipped any God, but one. I am fully perswaded there is but one God.

Theol. What say you to the second commandement; Thou shalt not make to thy selfe any grauen image, &c.

Asun. I neuer worshipped any images in my life: I defie them, I know they cannot helpe me, for they be but stockes and stones.

Theol. What say you to the third commandement, which is this; Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy GOD in vaine? &c.

Asun. Nay certainely, I was neuer counted a swearer in my life: but I haue serued God alwaies of a childe, and haue had a good faith in him euer since I could remember. I would be sorry else.

Theol. **What say you then to the fourth Commandement,** Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day, &c.

Asun. Nay, for that matter I keepe my Church as wel as any man in the parish where I dwell, & mind my praiers as well when I am there. I thanke God for it (though I say it my selfe) I haue been alway well giuen, and haue loued Gods word with all my heart; & it doth mee good to heare the Epistles and Gospels read euery Sunday by our Vicar.

Theol. **Tell me what say you to the fift Commandement, which is;** Honour thy Father and thy Mother, &c. **Doe you keep this?**

Asun. I haue alwaies loued and obeyed my father and mother from my heart: I hope there is no body can accuse me for that: and I am sure, if I keepe any commandement, it is this. For, when I was a boy, euery body said, that I was well giuen, and a toward child. Therefore if I should not keepe this Commandement, it would be a great griefe to me, and goe as neer my heart, as any thing that came to me this seuen yeares.

Theol. **What say you to the sixt Commandement:** Thou shalt not kill?

Asun. It were strange if I should not keep that.

Theol. **What say you to the seuenth:** Thou

ſhalt not commit adulterie?

Aſun. I thanke God for it, I was neuer giuen to women. God hath alwaies kept me from that; and I hope, will ſo ſtill.

Theol. What ſay you to the eighth: Thou ſhalt not ſteale?

Aſun. I am neither whooremaſter nor theefe.

Theol. What ſay you to the ninth: Thou ſhalt not beare falſe witneſſe? &c.

Aſun. I defie all falſe witneſſe bearing from my heart.

Theol. What ſay you to the laſt: Thou ſhalt not couet?

Aſun. I thanke God for it, I neuer coueted any mans goods but mine owne.

Theol. Now I perceiue, you are a wonderfull man: you can keepe all the Commandements. You are like the blinde Ruler, which ſaid vnto Chriſt, All theſe things haue I kept from my youth, Mat. 19 20. I perceiue now indeed, that it is no marueil though you make ſo light of preaching: for you haue no need of it. You are whole, you neede not the Phyſician: you feele no miſerie, and therefore you care not for mercie. For where miſerie is not felt, there mercy is not regarded: but I ſee you neede no Sauiour.

Aſun. You ſay not well in that, I need a Sauiour:

uiour: and it is my Lord Iesus that must saue me: for he made me.

Theol. What néede you a Sauiour, sith you are no sinner?

Asun. Yes beleeue me, I am a sinner. We are all sinners: there is no man but he sinneth.

Theol. How can you be a sinner, sith you keep all the Commandements?

Asun. Yes, I am a sinner for all that.

Theol. Can you both bee a sinner, and bee without sinne too? for hée that keepeth the Commandements, is without sinne. Which thing you say you doe. But I see how the case standeth; that a great number of such ignorant and sottish men as you are, will in generall say you are sinners, because your conscience telleth you so; but when it commeth to particulars, you know not how you sinne, nor wherein. I pray you therefore, let me lead you thorow the commandements againe, and deale with you in particulars, that I may bring you to the sight of your sinnes. How say you therefore, doe you vpon your knées, euery morning and euening, giue God thankes for his particular mercies, and manifold fauours towards you? And doe you call much vpon him priuately, and much also with your familie? Answer me plainly and simply.

Asun. I cannot say so.

Theol.

Theol. Then you haue broken the first commandement, which chargeth vs to giue God his due worship; whereof prayer and thanksgiuing are a part. So then here, at the very entrance you are found guiltie. Further, I demand of you, whether you neuer had any bythoughts in your prayers, and your heart hath not beene vpon other matters, euen then while you were in prayer.

Asun. I cannot deny that. For it is a very hard matter to pray without by-thoughts.

Theol. Then (by your owne confession) you haue broken the second Commandement, which doth command the right manner of Gods worship: that is, that as we must worship God, so we must doe it in faith, loue, zeale, and pure affections. So that here you are guiltie also; because when you pray, your mind is of other matters, and you doe it not in sincerite and truth. Further, I demand of you, whether you did neuer sweare by your faith, or troth, or by our Lady S. Marie, and such other oathes?

Asun. Yes by S. Marie haue I: I must needs confesse it.

Theol. We néede no further witnesse. Your very answer proueth it; for your answer is an oath: therefore here also are you guiltie, because you sweare by idols. Further, I demand of you, whether you did neuer trauell to Faires

on the sabbath day: or make bargaines on that day, or take iournies, or talke of worldly matters, neglecting holy duties?

Asun. Yes, God forgiue me, I haue.

Theol. Then are you guiltie of the breach of the fourth Commandement, which chargeth vs on paine of death, to spend the sabbath day in holy and religious duties, both publikely and priuately. Further I demand whether you instruct your wife, children, and seruants, in the true knowledge of God, and pray with them or no?

Asun. I am sure you would haue me speake the truth. I must needs confesse, I doe not, neither am I able to doe it.

Theol. Then you are guilty of the breach of the first Commandement, which commandeth all duties of superiours towards their inferiours, and of inferiours towards their superiours, whereof prayer and instructions are a part. Moreouer, I demand whether you were neuer angry or no?

Asun. Yes, an hundred times in my dayes: and I thinke there is no bodie but will bee angry at one time or other, especially when they haue cause.

Theol. Then you haue broken the first commandement, which chargeth vs to auoid wrath, anger, malice, desire of reuenge, and all such like

like fore-runners vnto murder. Furthermore, I aske you, whether you did neuer looke vpon a woman with a lust in your heart?

Asun. Yes, for I thinke there is no man free from thoughts that way. I had thought thoughts had been free.

Theol. No: thoughts are not free before God; for God knoweth our thoughts, and will punish vs, arraigne vs, and condemne vs for thoughts. Men know not thoughts; and therefore can make no lawes against thoughts: but because God is priuie to all our most secret thoughts, therefore hee hath made Lawes against them, and will condemne them. Therefore I conclude, that if you haue nourished adulterous thoughts in your heart, you are guiltie of the breach of the seuenth commandement, which forbiddeth all secret thoughts and prouocations whatsoeuer to adulterie. But further, I demand, whether you did neuer pilfer, purloine, and steale some small things from your neighbour; as, pasture, poultry, conies, apples, and such like?

Asun. I cannot cleere my selfe in these things; for I had thought they had been no sinne.

Theol. Then haue you broken the eight commandement, and stand guiltie of eternall death. For God in this commandement chargeth vs to haue as great care of our neighbours goods, as of our owne: and not to iniure him any manner

uer at bay, in thought, word, and deed. Therefore all deceit, pilfring, oppressing, and all vniust dealing with our neighbours goods, is here condemned. Moreouer let me aske you, whether you did neuer lye or dissemble?

Asun. Yea assuredly.

Theol. Then haue you broken the ninth commandement: wherein God charged vs, both in witnesse-bearing, and all other matters, to speake the plaine truth from our heart: without lying, or dissembling.

Last of all, I demand, whether you did neuer in your heart desire something that was not your own: as your neighbours house or ground, kine or sheepe, &c. therein bewraying the discontentment of your heart?

Asun. I am as guilty in this, as in any thing. For, God forgiue me, I haue often desired and lusted after this and that, which was none of mine owne, and so haue bewrayed my discontentment.

Theol. Then I perceiue (by your own confession) that you are guilty of the breach of all the Commandements.

Asun. I must needes confesse it: for I see now more into that matter than euer I did. I neuer heard so much before in my life, nor was euer asked any such questions, as you aske me. I had thought many of those things, which

you

you asked me, had been no sins at all.

Theol. I could haue conuicted you in a thousand other particulars, wherein you do daily, and hourely breake the Law of God. But my purpose was only to giue you a taste of some particular transgressions, and therewithall some little light by the way into the meaning of the Law: that thereby you might be brought to some better sight of your selfe, and might a little perceiue in what case you stand before God; and by that little conceiue a great deale more.

Asun. Well: now I doe plainely see, that I haue beene deceiued; and am not in so good estate before God, as I thought I had bin. Moreouer I see, that thousands are out of the way, which thinke they are in a good case before God: whereas indeed they are in blindnes, and in their sinnes. But Lord haue mercy vpon vs. Idoe now plainely see, that I am far from keeping the commandements: and I thinke no man doth keep them.

Theol. You may sweare it, I warrant you. For neither S. Paul, Dauid and the Virgin Mary could euer keepe any one of the commandements. I am glad you begin to see into the Law of God, and to haue some taste that way. For, as a mans knowledge and insight is into the Law, so is his knowledge & insight into himselfe. He that hath a deepe insight into the Law of God,

God, hath also a deepe insight into himselfe. He that hath no insight into the Law can haue no insight into himselfe. For the Law is that glasse, wherein we do behold the face of our soules before God. The Apostle saith, By the Law cometh the knowledge of sinne. Therefore those which are altogether ignorant of the Law, and neuer behold themselues in this glasse, do commit an hundred sinnes a day, which they know not of; and therefore are not grieued for them. For how can a man bee grieued for that which hee knoweth not? But now further, I pray you, giue me leaue to aske you some mee questions of the principles of Religion: to the end, that you knowing and feeling your ignorance, may be humbled therewith, bewaile it in time, & seeke after the true knowledge of God. But yet, by the way, I will aske Antilegon a question or two; because I desire to vnderstand what knowledge he hath in the grounds of religion. Tell mee therefore, Antilegon, what was the reason why Christ was conceiued by the holy Ghost?

Anti. I could answer you, but I will not. What authority haue you to examine me? shew your commission. When I see your warrant, I will answer you: in the meane time, you haue nothing to doe to examine mee. Meddle with that you haue to doe withall.

Theol. I perceiue you are not onely ignorant,

but

but wilfull and obstinate, and refuse all instructions. Therefore I will leaue you to God, and to your galled conscience. But I pray you Asunetus answer this question. What thinke you, what was the reason that Christ was conceiued by the holy Ghost?

Asun. Beleeue me Sir, that is an hard question. You may aske a wise man that question: For I cannot answer it.

Theol. What say you then to this? Who was Christs mother?

Asun. Marry, Sir, that was our blessed Lady.

Theol. What was Pontius Pilate?

Asun. I am somewhat ignorant, I am not book-learned: but if you will haue my simple opinion, I think it was the diuell. For none but the diuel would put our sweet Sauiour to death.

Theol. What is the holy Catholicke Church which you doe beleeue?

Asun. The communion of Saints, the forgiueneſſe of sins.

Theol. What doe you pray for, when you say, Thy Kingdome come.

Asun. I doe pray that God would send vs all of his grace, that we may serue him, and doe as we ought to doe, and keep vs in a good mind to God-ward, and to haue him much in our mind. For some (God blesse vs) haue nothing but the Diuel in their mind: they do nothing a Gods name.

Theol.

Theol. What is the Sacrament?

Asun. The Lords Supper.

Theol. How many Sacraments be there?

Asun. Two.

Theol. Which be they?

Asun. Bread and Wine.

Theol. What is the principall end of your comming to receiue the Sacrament?

Asun. To receiue my maker.

Theol. What is the principall vse of a Sacrament?

Asun. The body and blood of Christ.

Theol. What profit and comfort haue you by a Sacrament?

Asun. In token that Christ dyed for vs.

Theol. I can but pitty you for you ignorance: for, it is exceeding grosse & palpable. Your answers are to no purpose, and bewray a wonderfull blindnes and senslesnesse in matters of religion. I am sorry, that now I haue not time and leasure to let you see your folly and extreame ignorance: as also to lay open vnto you the sense & meaning of the Articles of the Faith, the Lords Prayer, and the Sacraments, and all other the grounds of Christian Religion.

Asun. What course would you wish me to take, that I may come out of ignorance, and attaine vnto the true knowledge of God?

Theol. Surely, I would wish you to be diligent

gent in hearing of Sermons, and reading the Scriptures with prayer and humility. Also that you would peruse Catechismes, and other good bookes; and especially Virels grounds of Religion, and the workes of the two worthy seruants of God, Master Giffard, and Master Perkins, and other mens that haue done great seruice to the Church, and for whom thousands are bound to giue GOD thankes. If you take this course, you shall by Gods grace, within a short time grow to some good measure of knowledge in all the maine grounds of Christian Religion.

Phil. I had not thought, any man had been so ignorant as I now perceiue this man is.

Theol. Yes verily: there be thousands in his case. And I do know by experience, that many will vse the very same answers; or at least, very little differing.

Phil. I warrant you, if you had questioned with him of kine or sheep, purchasing of lands, taking of leases, or any other matters vnder the Sun, you should haue found him very ripe and ready in his answers.

Theol. I am so perswaded too. For let a man talke with worldly men of worldly matters, and their answere is neuer to seeke. They will talke very freshly with you of such matters, if it bee all the day long. For they haue a deep in-

sight

sight into earthly things, and do wholly delight to talke of them, being neuer weary. For it is their ioy, their meate and their drinke. But come once to talke with them of Gods matters (as, of faith, repentance, regeneration, &c.) you shall finde them the veriest dullards and dunces in the world. For when speech is had of these things, they are so besotd, that they cannot tell where they are, nor what they say.

Phil. In my iudgement, such mens case is very pitifull and dangerous. And so is this mans case also, if God do net very speedily pull him out of it.

Theol. Questionlesse. For God saith, My people perish for want of knowledge. Our Lord Iesus saith, that ignorance is the cause of all errours. Ye erre, saith he, not knowing the Scriptures. The Apostle saith, that ignorance doth alienate vs from the life of God. For saith he, The Gentiles were darkned in their cogitation, being strangers from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, Eph. 4.18. So then it is cléere, that ignorance is not the Mother of deuotion, as the Papists do auouch: but it is the mother of errour, death and destruction; as the Scripture affirmeth. Our Lord, foreseeing the great danger of ignorance (how thereby thousands are carried headlong into hell) doth admonish all men to search the Scriptures, which

Hos. 4.7.

Mat. 22.

doe testifie of him, that so they might get out of the most dangerous gulfe of ignorance; wherin multitudes are implunged. Therefore the Noble-men of Berea are commended by the holy Ghost, Act. 17.11. because they received the word with all readinesse, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Oh therfore that men would earnestly seek after the knowledge of God in time, & (as the Prophet saith) seeke the Lord whilst hee may be found, call vpon him whilst he is neere, Esay 55.6.

Phil. I doe see, that all ignorance in matters of faith, is dangerous: but I thinke wilfull ignorance is of all other most dangerous.

Theol. Wilfull ignorance (no doubt) is a plain prognostication and demonstratiue argument of eternall death: for it is a most horrible and fearfull thing for men to refuse instruction, despise counsell, harden their hearts, stop their eares, & close vp their eyes against God. This is the very vpshot of our decay.

Phil. I pray you, what call you hardnesse of heart?

Theol. An hard heart is that which is neither moued with Gods mercies, nor feared with his iudgments; neither feareth the Law, nor regardeth the Gospell; neyther is holpen by threatnings, nor softned by chastnings; which is vnthankfull for Gods benefits, and disobedient to his

his counsels: made cruell by his rods, and dissolute by his fauours: vnshamefac't to filthinesse, and fearlesse to perils; vncourteous to men, and retchlesse to God; forgetfull of things past, negligent in things present, and improuident in things to come.

Phil. Lay forth yet more plainely the state of ignorant and hard-hearted men, and shew how lamentable it is.

Theol. If a man be outwardly blinde, we dos pitty him and say, There goes a poor blind man: but if he be both blind and deafe, do we not more pitty him, and say, Oh! in how miserable a case is that man! but if he be both blinde, deafe and dumbe, do we not most of all pity him, and say, Oh! that man is in a most woefull taking, and in a most pitifull plight.

How much more then are they to bee pitied, which, as concerning their soules, are both blind, deafe and dumbe? For, the diseases of the soule are farre more dangerous, and more to be pitied than those of the body.

Would it not pity a mans heart, to see a poor sheepe in a Lyons mouth, whilst he teareth him, renteth him, and puls out his guts? Euen such is the case of ignorant men in the clawes of the diuell. For, the diuell hath them vnder him, rideth them at his pleasure, & teareth their soules in peeces.

Oh that wee had eyes to see these things, hearts to feele them, and affections to bee throughly moued with them, euen vnto mourning and teares!

Phil. Few do thinke that ignorant men are in so wofull case as you speak of. For they think ignorance wil excuse them. And some will say, they are glad they haue so little knowledge. For, if they should haue much knowledge of their masters will, and doe it not, they should be beaten with many stripes; but now, beeing ignorant, they thinke all is safe.

Theol. God willed his people to offer sacrifice for their sinnes of ignorance, Leuit. 4. 3. therfore ignorance is a sinne, & excuseth no man. And as for the state of their soules before God, it is most miserable, if we could see into their soules as we see their bodies. For, assuredly there be multitudes which ruffle it out in velvets and silks, and most braue and glittering outsides, but inwardly are full of filthinesse and sin: They haue fine delicate bodies, but most vgly, blacke and filthy soules? if a man could see into their soules as he doth into their bodies, he would stop his nose at the stink of them. For, they smell ranke of sin in the nostrils of God, his Angels, and all good men.

Phil. Then I perceiue by your speech, that the case of all ignorant and prophane men is

feare-

fearfull in the ſight of God; and that all good men are to pitty them, and to pray for them.

Theol. If two blinde and deafe men ſhould walke in a beaten path that leads to a great déep pond, wherein they are like to bée drowned, if they goe forward; and two men farre off ſhould whope vnto them, and will them not to go forward, leſt they be drowned; yet they, neither ſéeing any man, nor hearing any man, goe forward, and are drowned: were not this a lamentable ſpectacle to behold? Euen ſo is it with all the ignorant, blind, and deaf ſoules of the world: for, they caſt no perils, but walke on boldly to deſtruction. And though the Preachers of the Goſpell whope neuer ſo loud vnto them, or giue them neuer ſo many warnings and caueats to take héede, yet they béeing inwardly blinde ſée nothing, and ſpiritually deafe heare nothing, and therefore goe on forward in their ſinnes and ignorance, till they ſuddenly fall into hell-pit.

But caſe alſo two great Armies ſhould pitch a field, and fight a maine battell vpon a Plaine, and that ſome man ſhould ſtand vpon the toppe of a mountaine hard by, and behold all, and ſhould ſée with his owne eyes, how thouſands, and tenne thouſands went to wracke, and fell downe on euery ſide as thicke as haile, the whole Plain ſwimming in blood; and ſhould alſo hear

the groaning of souldiers wounded, and the dolefull sighes & groanings of many Captaines and Colonels giuing vp the Ghost: were not this a most woefull spectacle? Euen so, when we doe clearely see Satan wound and murder thousand thousand soules, is it not a far more tragical and lamentable sight? and ought it not euen to kill our hearts to behold it? But (alas) men haue no eyes to see into these things. And yet certain it is, that Sathan doth continually, and in most fearfull manner, massacre innumerable soules. Thus haue I shewed you the wofull estate of profane and ignorant men.

Phil. If it be so, you that bee Ministers and Preachers of the Gospell, and haue taken vpon you the cure and charge of soules, haue neede to looke about you, and doe what in you lyeth to saue soules; and, as good shepheards, in great pitie and compassion, to labour to pull them out of the pawes of this roaring Lion, which goes about continually, seeking whom he may deuour.

Theol. It standeth vs vpon indeed, very seriously and carefully to look to it, as we wil answer it at the dreadfull day of iudgement. For, it is no small matter that we haue taken in hand; which is, to care for the flocke which Christ hath bought with his blood. Would to God therefore that we would leaue striuing

about

about other matters, and strive together all about this, who can pull most out of the Kingdome of Sathan, sinne and ignorance; who can winne most soules; and who can performe best seruice to the Church. This were a good strife indeede, and would to God that we might once at last with ioyned forces goe about it, and with one heart and hand ioyne together to build vp Gods house. If through our own follies the work hath bin hindered or any breach made, let vs in wisedome & loue labor to make it vp again: if there haue beene any declining and coldnesse, let vs now at last reuiue: let vs stirre vp our selues, that wee may stirre vp others: let vs be zealous and feruent in spirit, that wee may through Gods grace put life into others, and rowze vp this dead, declining and cold age wherein we liue. So shall God be glorified, his Church edified, his Saints comforted, his people saued, his throne erected, and the kingdome of the diuell ouerthrowne.

Phil. What think you were the best course to effect this which you speake of?

Theol. This is a thing that must bee exceedingly laboured-in of vs which are the Ministers and Preachers of the Gospell. And here is required diligence, and (as wee say) double diligence: for the people are euery where very ignorant. Some are stones, altogether vncapable

of

of instructions: others are froward and wilfull: some will receiue the doctrine, but not the practice: some againe are altogether set vpon peeuishnesse and cauilling. So that a man were better take vpon him the charge of keeping Wolues and Beares, than the charge of soules. For, it is the hardest thing in the world to reformemens disorders, and to bring them into order; to pull mens soules out of the Kingdome of Sathan, and to bring them to God. It is, as we say, an endlesse peece of worke, an infinite toile, a labour of all labours: I quake to think of it. For men are so obstinate and irrefragable, that they will bee brought into no order: they will come vnder no yoke. They will not bee ruled by God, nor bridled by his Word. They will follow their owne swing. They will runne after their owne lusts and pleasures. They will rage and storme if you goe about to curb them & restraine them of their wils, likings & liberties. They wil haue their wils, likings and liberties. They will haue their wils, and follow their old fashions, say what you will, and doe what you can.

Is it not, thinke you, a hasse peece of worke to smoth and square such Timber-logs, so full of knots and knobs? Is it not a tedious and irksome thing to thinke vpon? And would it not kill a mans heart to goe about it? For, how

hard

hard a thing is it to bring such into frame, as are so farre out of frame?

Phil. Well Sir, you can but do your endeauour, and commit the successe to God. You can but plant and water: let God giue the increase. You are Ministers of the letter; but not of the Spirit. You baptize with water; but not with the holy Ghost. If you therefore preach diligently, exhort, admonish and reproue, publikely and priuately, studying by all good example of life, and seeking with all good zeale, care and conscience, to doe the vttermost that in you lyeth, to reduce them from their euill waies; I take it you are discharged, though they remaine stubborne and incorrigible. For, you know what the Lord saith by his Prophet, Ezech. 33. 9. If you doe admonish them, and giue them warning, then you shall be discharged, and their blood shall be required at their own hands.

Theol. You haue spoken the truth. And therefore, sith some must needes take vpon them this so great a Charge, it will be our best course to labour much with them in Catechizing, and priuate instructions; and that in most familiar and plaine manner. For, much good hath beene done, and is done, this way. The ignorant sort must bee much laboured vpon this way: and so, no doubt, much good may be done.

For

Pro. 14 23. For, In all labour there is profit. Herein wee (that are the Ministers of Christ) must be content to be abased, and to teach the poore ignorant people in most plaine manner; asking them many easie questions, and often questioning with them in most plaine and louing manner, till wee haue brought them to some taste and smacke of the principles of Christian Religion. We must not bee ashamed to vse repetitions and tautologies, and to tell them one thing twenty times ouer and ouer againe, here a line, and there a line, here a little and there a little, precept vpon precept; as the Prophet speaks, Esay 18.10. I know right well, nothing goes more against the stomack of a Schollar, and him that is learned indeed, than to doe thus. It is as irksome and tedious, as to teach A B C. Some can at no hand endure it. But truely, truly, I finde now, after a long experience, that if we will do any good to these simple and ignorant soules, we must enter into this course: and wee may not bee ashamed of it. For, it will bee our crowne, and our glory, to winne soules, howsoeuer we bee abased. Let vs therefore be well content to stoope downe, that Christ may bee exalted: Let vs be abased, that God may bee honoured: let vs do all things in great loue to Christ; who hath said, If thou louest me, feed, feed, feed my flock, Iohn 21.15. Let vs therefore testifie our loue to

him

him by feeding his flocke. Let vs doe all things in great loue, and deepe compassion, towards the poore soules that go astray: As it is said, that our Lord Iesus was moued to pity, and his bowels did yearne, to see the people as sheepe without a shepheard. Let it likewise moue vs throughly, and make our hearts to bleede, to see so many poore sheepe of Christ wandring and straying in the mountaines and wildernesse of this world, caught in euery bramble, and hanged in euery bush, ready to bee deuoured of the Wolfe. Thus haue I shewed you what course (in my iudgement) is best to bee taken for the deliuering of poor ignorant soules out of the captiuitie of Sathan and sinne.

Phil. Now as you haue declared what course is best to be followed on your part which are Ministers and Preachers of the Gospell: so I pray you shew what is best to bee done of vs which are the people of God.

Theol. The best counsell that I can giue you, if it were for my life, is, to be much exercised in the Word of God, both in the hearing, reading, and meditation thereof, and also to purchase vnto your selfe the sincere Ministrie of the Gospell, and to make conscience to liue vnder it; esteeming your selfe happy if you haue it, though you want other things; and vnhappy if you haue it not, though you haue all other

things.

things. For, it is a peerelesse pearle, an incomparable iewell. For the purchasing whereof, we are aduised by our Lord Iesus, to sell all that we haue, rather than to go without it, Mat.13.44. Again, our Sauiour Christ giues the same counsell to the Church of Laodicea, in these words, I councell thee to buy of me gold tryed by the fire, that thou maist be rich; and white raiment, that thou maist be cloathed, and that thy filthy nakednes do not appear: and anoint thine eies with eye-salue, that thou maist see, Apoc.3.18. Where you see, the word of God is compared to most precious gold, whereby we are made spiritually rich; and to glittering attire, wherewith our naked soules are clothed; and to an eye-salue, wherwith our spiritual blindnesse is cured. We are aduertised also by Iesus Christ, whose counsell is euer the best, to buy these things, whatsoeuer they cost vs. The same councell also giueth wise Salomon, saying, Buy the truth, but sell it not, Pro.23.23. So then you see the counsell which herein I giue you, is not of mine owne, but the counsell of Iesus himselfe, and Salomon the wise. And who can, or who dare, except against their counsell?

Asun. Is your meaning, that men must of necessity frequent preaching of the word? will not bare reading serue the turne?

Theol. I told you before, that reading is

good, profitable, and necessary: but yet it is not sufficient. Wée must not content our selues with that onely: but wée must goe further, and gette vnto our selues the sound preaching of the Gospell; as the chiefest and most principall meanes which God hath ordained and sanctified for the sauing of men. As it is plainely set downe, 1. Corinth. 1. 21. When as the world (by wisdome) knew not God, in the wisedome of God it pleased God, by the foolishnesse of preaching, to saue them that beleeue. The meaning of it is; that when as men, neither by naturall wisedome, nor the contemplation of the creatures, could sufficiently attaine to the true knowledge of God; the Lord, according to his heauenly and infinite wisedome, thought of another course, which is, to saue men by preaching; which the world counteth foolishnesse. And by the way note, that the preaching of the word is not a thing of humane inuention: but it is Gods owne deuice, and came first out of his brain, and the next and nearest way to saue mens soules.

Wise Salomon also, in the Booke of the Prouerbs, telleth vs, that the preaching of Gods Word (which he calleth Vision, vsing the word of the Prophets, which called their Sermons, Visions) is not a thing that may be spared, or that we may be at choise whether

we

we haue it or no: but he maketh it to be of absolute necessitie vnto eternall life. For he saith, Where vision faileth, the people are left naked, Prouerbs 29.18. So indeed it is in the Originall. But the old translation giueth vs the sense thus: Where the Word of God is not preacht, there the people perish. Then you see, that Salomon striketh it dead, telling vs, that all they which are without preaching of the word, are in exceeding danger of losing their soules. Oh that men could be perswaded of this! S. Paul also saith, that faith commeth by hearing the word preached. For he saith, How can they hear without a Preacher? Rom. 10.14. If faith commeth by hearing the word preached, then I reason thus: No preaching, no faith: no faith, no Christ: no Christ, no eternall life: for, eternall life is onely in him. Let vs then put them together thus: Take away the word, take away faith: take away faith, take away Christ: take away Christ, and take away eternall life. So then it followes; Take away the word, and take away eternall life.

Or wee may reade them backeward thus: If we will haue heauen, wee must haue Christ. If wee will haue Christ, wee must haue faith. If wee will haue faith, wee must haue the word preached. Then it followeth thus: If wee will haue heauen, wee must haue the word preached.

Then

Then I conclude, that preaching generally, and for the most part, is of absolute necessity vnto eternall life; as meat is of absolute necessity for the preseruation of our bodies, as grasse and fodder are of absolute necessity for the vpholding of the life of beasts, and water of absolute necessity for the life of fishes. Then this beeing so, men are with great care and conscience to heare the Gospel preached, to frequent Sermons, to resort much to Gods house and habitation, where his honour dwelleth; with Dauid to say, One thing haue I desired of the Lord: that will I require, euen that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the dayes of my life, to behold the beautie of the Lord, and to visit his holy Temple, Psal. 27.4. With godly Marie to say, One thing is necessary, and so chuse the better part, Luke 14.42. With the poore Cripple at Bethesda, to wait for the mouing of the waters by the Angel, that his impotencie may bee cured, Iohn 5.7. I meane, that we should tye our selues to the first mouing of the spirituall waters of life, by the Preachers of the Gospell, that our spirituall impotencie may bee helpen and releeued. For, the Ministry of the Gospell is that golden pipe whereby and where-through all the goodnesse of God, all the sweetnesse of Christ, and all heauenly graces whatsoeuer, are deriued vnto vs. Which thing was shadowed in the Law by the

Pomegranates in the skirts of Aarons garments, and ye golden Bels betweén them, round about; that is, a golden Bell and a Pomegranate, a golden Bell and a Pomegranate, Exod. 8.33. The golden Bels did signifie the preaching of the Gospell; and the Pomegranates, the sweet sauour of Christs death. Noting thereby, that the sweet sauour of Christs death, and all the benefits of his passion, should be spread abroad by the preaching of the Gospell. Thus you see, that if euer men purpose to be saued, they must make more account of the preaching of the Gospel than they haue done, and not think (as most men doe) that they may be without it, and yet doe well enough: and some had as leeue be without it as haue it. For, it doth but disquiet them, and trouble their consciences: but wo be vnto such.

Phil. Yet we see, where the word is soundly preached, there be many bad people: and the reasons thereof, in mine opinion, are two: The one, that God taketh his holy Spirit from many in hearing the Word; so that their hearing is made vnfruitfull: The other, that the Diuell hath an hundred deuices to hinder the effectuall working of the Word; so as it shall doe no good at all, nor take any effect in multitudes of men. But you, Master *Theologus*, can better lay open this matter than

than I: I pray you therefore speake somthing of it.

Theol. The sleights of Sathan, in this behalfe, are more, and more slie, than I, or any man else, can possibly discouer. For, who is able to descry, or in sufficient manner to lay open, the deep subtilties, and most secret and sinfull suggestions, of the Diuell in the hearts of men? Hee is so cunning a crafts-master this way, that none can perfectly trace him. His workings in the hearts of men are with such close and hidden deceits, and most methodicall and crafty conueighances, that none can sufficiently finde them out. But yet notwithstanding, I will bewray vnto you so much as I know or can conceiue of his dealings with them that heare the Word, that hee may steale it out of their hearts, and make it fruitlesse and vnprofitable. First of all, he bestirreth him, and laboureth hard to keep men fast a-sleepe in their sinnes, that they may haue no care at all of their owne saluation; and therefore dissuadeth them from hearing, or reading the Word at all; lest they should be awaked. If this will not preuaile, but that they must needes heare, then his craft is to make their hearing vnprofitable, by sleepinesse, dulnesse, by-thoughts, conceitednesse, and a thousand such like. If this will not serue

the turne, but that the Word doth get within them, and worke vpon them (so as thereby they growe to some knowledge and vnderstanding of the truth) then hee practiseth another way, which is, to make them rest themselues vpon their bare knowledge, and so become altogether consciencelesse. If this will not suffice, but that men fall to doing, and leaue some sinnes, especially the grosse sinnes of the world, and doe some good; then he perswadeth them to trust to those doings, without Christ, and to thinke themselues well enough, because they doe some good, and leaue some euill. If this be not enough, but that men attaine vnto the true iustifying faith which apprehendeth Christ, and resteth vpon his merits, then hee deuiseth how to blemish the beautie of their faith, and weaken their comfort, through many frailties and wants, yea grosse downefals, and ranke euils; so as they shall be but spotted and leprous Christians. If this weapon will not worke, but that Christians doe toyne all good vertues with their faith, and aboundantly shine forth in all the fruits of righteousnesse, then he casteth about another way, which is to dannt and dampe them with discouragements; as, pouerty, necessity, sicknesse, reproaches, contempt, persecutions, &c. If none of all these will doe the deed, but that

men

men constantly beléeue in Christ, and patiently and ioyfully endure all afflictions, then his last refuge is, to blow them vp with gun-powder: that is, to puffe them vp with a pride of their gifts, graces, and strength; and so to giue them an vtter ouerthrow, whilst they doe not walke humbly, and giue God the praise of his gifts.

Thus haue you a little taste of Sathans cunning, in making the Word vnfruitfull amongst vs.

Asun. I pray you good Sir (seeing I am ignorant & vnlearned) giue me some particular directions out of the Word of God, for the good guiding and ordering of my particular actions, in such sort as that I may glorifie God in the earth, and after this life bee glorified of him for euer.

Theol. It were an infinite thing to enter into all particulars: but briefly doe this; First, séeke God earnestly in his word, pray much: in all things giue thankes. Eschew euill, and doe good. Feare God, and kéepe his commandements: reforme your selfe, and your houshold: loue vertue, and vertuous men: kéep company with the godly, and auoyd the society of the wicked. Liue soberly, iustly, and holily in this present euill world. Speak alwaies graciously, and beware of filthy communication. Re-

compence no man euil for euill: but recompence euill with good. Be courteous & pitifull towards all men. Take héed of swearing, cursing and banning. Beware of anger, wrath and bitternesse. Praise your friend openly: reproue him secretly. Speak no euill of them that are absent, nor of the dead. Speak euill of no man: speak alwaies the best: or at least, not the worst. Reuerence Gods Name, and kéep his Sabbaths. Auoid all the signes of condemnation, and labor after all the signes of saluation. Aboue all things take héed of sin: for that is the very cut-throat of the soule, and of all goodnesse. Tremble therefore, and sin not. For, if you sinne, marke what followes:

Six great dangers in sinne,
- God seeth.
- His Angels beare witnesse.
- The Conscience pricketh.
- Death threatneth.
- The Diuell accuseth.
- Hell deuoureth.

You sée then that sin is no scar-crow, or iesting matter. Euery sin that a man committeth is as a thorn thrust déep into the soule: which wil not be got out again, but with many a sigh, and many a sorrowfull Oh, oh. Euery sin is written with a pen of iron, and the point of a Diamond vpon the conscience, Ier. 17. 1, & shall in ỳ

last

last day (when the bookes shall be opened) accuse vs, and giue in euidence against vs. If a man commit sin with pleasure, the pleasure passeth away, but the conscience and sting of the sin abideth, and tormenteth deadly: but if a man doe well, though with labour and painefulnesse, the paine passeth away, yet the conscience of well-doing remaineth with much comfort. But the best end of sinne is alwayes repentance; if not in this life, then with wo and alas when it is too late. Therefore take heed in time: take heed, I say, of sinne. Note thi

Six most hurtfull effects of sinne.

- Sin hardens the heart, Heb. 3. 13.
- Sin gnaws the conscience, 1 Sa. 25.
- Sin fights against the soule, 1 Pe. 1. 11
- Sin brings forth death, Iames 1. 15.
- Sin makes ashamed, Rom. 6. 21.
- Sin procures plagues of body and soule, Deut. 28.

Behold therefore the euill effects of sinne. For this cause, Zophar the Naamathite speaks very wisely to Iob, saying, When thou shalt lift thy face out of thy sinne, thou shalt be strong, and shalt not feare: thou shalt forget all sorrow: thou shalt remember it as the waters that are past, Iob 11. Here Zophar plainly sheweth, that the auoiding of sinne is our strength, and the committing of it, our weakening.

According to that of Salomon, The way of the Lord is the strength of the vpright man, Pro. 20.19. Therefore walke in the way of God, and take heede of the wates of sin: for God punishes euery sinne his way; some one way, and some another: and no sin can escape vnpunished. For, because God is iust, therefore he must needs punish sinne in all men, though in diuers manners; as, the wicked in their owne persons, the godly in Christ. Beware of it therefore, and flatter not your selfe in your sinnes. Remember how euery disobedience, and euery transgression hath had a iust recompence of reward. God hath in all ages matched the cause with the effect; that is, sin with the punishment of sin. The Israelites, for breaking the first commandement in making other gods, were often smitten by the hand of God, Exod. 32.10. Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, for the breach of the second commandement, in offering strange fire vpon Gods Altar, were consumed with fire, Leu.10.2. He that blasphemed, and transgressed the third commandement, was stoned to death, Num.15. He that broke the fourth commandement, in gathering sticks on the Sabbath, was likewise stoned, Num.15.52. Absolon, transgressing the fift, was hanged in his own hair, 2 Sa.18. Cain, transgressing the first, in slaying his brother Abel, was branded with the mark of Gods wrath,

Note how God in all ages hath punisht the breakers of his law.

Gen.

Gen.4.15. Sichem the son of Hamor, transgressing the seuenth, in defiling Dinah, the daughter of Iacob, was slaine by Simeon & Leui, the sons of Iacob, Gen.34.26. Achan, sinning against ỳ eighth commandement, in stealing the wedge of gold, & the Babylonish garment, was stoned to death, Ios.7.25. Ananias and Sapphira, sinning against the ninth, in lying and dissembling, were suddenly smitten with death, Acts 5.6. Ahab, transgressing the tenth commandement, in coueting and discontentment, was deuoured of dogs, 1 Reg 21.24. Or if you will haue original sin therein onely forbidden, then infants are therefore punished with death, Rom.5.14.

Thus we sée there is no dallying with God: but, if we sin, we are as sure to be ierkt for it, as the coat is on our back. Therfore let vs not deceiue our selues, nor make light of sin. For, sin is no scar-bug; and we shall one day finde it so. And howsoeuer we make light of some sins, yet in very déed all sin is odious in the sight of God: yea, all sin is hainous and capital in this respect, that it is against a person of infinite being; it is against God himselfe; it is against the highest Maiestie. For, the greatnesse of the person offended, doth inhaunse and increase the greatness of the sinne.

As for example: If a man raile at a Iustice of Peace, he shall be stocked: if he raile

at

at one of his Maiesties priuy Councell, he shall bee imprisoned: but if he raile at his own Maiesty, he shall be hanged. So then you see how a sin is increased by the dignity of the person offended. Now then, sith all mortall Princes are but dust in the sight of God (and he is a person of infinit and incomparable Maiesty) how hainous and how flagitious a thing is it, in any wise, or after any sort, to sin against his most royall and sacred person? Well then, to grow to some conclusion, this I doe aduise you; as to shun all vice, so to embrace all vertue; as to put off the old man, so to put on the new man. Remember often and alwayes what shall become of you after this life, where you shalbe forty yeers hence, in Hell, or in Heauen. Look well to that in time; and therefore so liue that you may liue alwaies: Consider often in your serious cogitation,

Nine profitable considerations,
- What you haue been.
- What you are.
- What you shall be.
- What God hath done for you.
- What he doth.
- What he will doe.
- Gods iudgements past.
- Gods iudgements present.
- Gods iudgements to come.

Awake

Awake at last, and take care for your saluation. Sleep no longer in sinne, least yee perish eternally. For, verily there is a reward for the righteous: doubtlesse there is a God that iudges the earth. And this is the best counsell I can giue you.

Asun. Your counsell is very good. I pray God giue me grace to follow it; and so to liue, that I may please God, and goe to heauen in the end.

Theol. You must take heede you speake not these words of course, and for fashions sake, hauing no settled purpose in your heart to follow these directions. For, there bee numbers that can skill to giue good words, but they will doe nothing. They thinke they highly please God with their good words, and that God will take them for payment; as though God regarded words. They would faine goe to heauen, but they will take no paines, they will leaue no sinnes, they will not forgoe their lusts and pleasures. They would haue the reward of Gods children, but they will not do the works of Gods children. They would haue the sweet, but they will none of the soure. They would haue the Crowne, but they will fight never a stroke. They would faine come to Canaan, but they are loth to trauell that long and dangerous way which leadeth vnto it. Therefore those men, being

This is most mens case.

being the sons of idlenesse, will stey short (in the end) of that they looke for. For, the Spirit saith, The sluggard lusts: but his soule hath nought, Pro. 13.4. We must therefore leaue bare words, and come to deeds. For, our Lord Iesus saith, Not euery one that saith Lord, Lord, shal enter into the kingdome of heauen: but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heauen, Mat. 7.21. Where we see Christ (in plaine tearmes) excludes out of his kingdome all those whose religion consisteth onely in good words, and smooth speeches; but make no conscience to practise the commandements of God.

Dauid, hauing made some good preparation for the building of the Temple, and perceiuing his son Salomon to haue stuffe and prouision enough to perfect and finish it, doth most wisely encourage him to the work, in these words: Vp, and be doing, and the Lord shall be with thee, 1 Chro. 12.16. Oh that men would follow this counsell of Dauid, that they would vp, and bee doing, and not sit still and do nothing; that they would leaue wordes and countenances, and set vpon the practice of Gods Law, and study with all care and conscience to be obedient to his wil. Then assuredly God would bee with them, and blesse them, and much good would come of it. For, the Scripture saith, Prouerbs 14.32. In all labour there is profit or increase: but the talke

of

of the lips only bringeth want.

Phil. Most mens mindes are so wholly drowned in the loue of this world, that they haue no heart to obey God, nor any delight in his commandements.

Theol. The greatest part of men are like to the Gadarens, which esteemed their Swine more than Christ. As we see in these our dayes, how many make more account of their kine & sheep, than of the most glorious Gospell of Christ. They highly esteeme dung, and contemn pearle. They are carefull for trifles, and regard not the things of greatest moment; and therefore may very fitly be compared to a man, who hauing his wife and children very sick, doth vtterly neglect them, and is altogether carefull for the curing of his hogs eares.

Phil. We are somewhat digressed from the matter we had in hand. I pray you therefore, if you haue any more matter of good counsell to giue to *Asinnetus*, that you would presently deliuer it.

Theol. I haue little more to say, saue only I would aduise him often to remember, and much to muse on these things:

The

Nine things much to bee thought of.

The euill he hath committed.
The good he hath omitted.
The time he hath mis-spent.
The shortnesse of this life.
The vanitie of this world.
The excellencie of the world to come.
Death, than the which nothing is more terrible.
The day of iudgement, than the which nothing is more fearefull.
Hell fire, than the which nothing is more intolerable.

Phil. This is short and sweet indeed. You haue touched some of these points before, in this our conference. But I am very desirous to heare somewhat more of the two last, which yet haue not been touched.

Theol. Sith you are desirous, I will briefly deliuer vnto you that which I haue receiued from the Lord. First, concerning the day of iudgement, I finde in the volume of Gods book, that it shall be very terrible and dreadfull. For, The Son of man shal come in the clouds of heauen, with power and great glorie, Mat. 24. 30. S. Peter saith, The day of the Lord shall come as a thiefe in the night. In the which, the heauens shall passe away with a noise, the elements shal melt with heat, & the earth with the workes that are therin shalbe burnt vp, 2 Pet. 3. 10 The

Apostle

Apostle tels vs, that at Christs coming ỳ whole world shall be of a light fire; and that all castles, towers, godly buildings, gold, siluer, veluets, silkes, and all the glittering hue, glory, and beauty of this world, shal be consumed to pouder and ashes. For, he saith plainly, 2 Pet. 3. 9. The heauens and the earth, which are now, are reserued to fire, against the day of iudgement, and of the destruction of vngodly men. Moreouer, he strongly proues, that as the world was once destroyed by water; so the second time, in the end therof, it shal be destroyd with fire. The Apostle Paul witnesseth the same things, 2 Thes. 7. 1. For, he saith, Christ shall come from heauen, with all his mighty Angels, in flaming fire. And in another place hee notes the terrour of his coming to iudgement, saying, He shall come with a shout, with the voice of the Archangell, and the trumpet of God, 1 Thes. 4. 16. We le by experience, that the comming of mortall Princes to any place is with great pompe and glory. They haue great trains and troops behind them and before them. They are accompanied with many Nobles: godly Lords, and gallant Ladies doe attend vpon them. The Sword-bearer, Trumpetters, and Harbengers, go before: many flaunting and stately Personages follow after. Now then, if the comming of mortall Princes bee so pompous and glorious: how

much

much more glorious shall the comming of the Sonne of man be; in whose sight all mortall Princes are but dust: The Scriptures do affirm, that his second comming vnto iudgement shall be with such resplendent and vnspeakeable glorie, that euen the most excellent creatures shall blush at it. For, The Sunne shall be darkned: the Moone shall not giue her light: and the Stars shall fall from heauen, Matthew 24.29. Meaning thereby, that the most glorious and bright-shining Creatures shall bee clouded and obscured by the vnconceiueable brightnesse of Christs comming.

Moreouer, the terror of Christs comming is noted vnto vs in this, that immediately before it, the very Sea shall quake and tremble, and in his kinde cry out. For, it is said, that The Sea shall roar (and make a noise in most dolefull and lugubrious manner) and mens hearts shal faile them for fear, & for looking after those things which shal come on the world: for the powers of heauen shall be shaken, Luke 21.25. O what shal become of swearers, drunkards, whoremongers, and such like, in that day! They shall seek to creep into an auger-hole to hide their heads. They shall then cry woe and alas that euer they were born. They shall wish that they had neuer been borne, or that their mother had born them teeth. And, as it is said in the Apocalypse,

They

They shall say to the mountaines and rockes, Fall on vs & hide vs from the presence of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lambe. For the great day of his wrath is come, and who can stand?

We see therefore, that the comming of Christ shall not be base and contemptible, as in his first visitation: but it shall be most terrible, princely, and glorious. And as the Scriptures doe affirme, that his comming shall be with great terrour and dread: so also they do shew that it shall bee very sudden and vnlooked for. For the day of the Lord shall come as a thiefe in the night: as the trauell that commeth vpon a woman. As a snare it shall come on all them that dwell on the face of the earth. That is, it shall suddenly catch and intangle all men, wheresoeuer they be in the world. As the earthquake, which was néere thirty yeares agon, did suddenly take the world tardy, they not thinking of any such matter: So shall the comming of the Son of man to iudgemen, take the world tardy and vnprepared; for few there bée that think of any such matter. Sith therefore the second appearing of Christ shall bée with such suddennesse, let vs feare and tremble: for all sudden things are to bée feared.

2 Pet.3.10

1 Thes.5.1

Luk.21.35

Phil. Well Sir, as you haue shewed vs the terrour and suddennes of Christs comming, so

shew vs the purpose and end of his comming.

Theol. The principall end of his comming shalbe to kéep a generall audit, to call all men to an account, to haue a reckoning of euery mans particular actions, & to reward them according to their déeds, as it is written, Mat. 26. 27. The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his Angels: and then shall he giue to euery man according to his deeds. Againe, the Apostle saith to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 5. 10. We must all appear before the iudgement seate of Christ, that euery man may receiue the things wch are done in his body, according to that wch he hath done, whether it be good or euil.

Here we doe plainly sée, that ẏ end of Christs comming shall be to iudge euery man according to his workes, that is, as his workes shall declare him, and testifie of him and of his faith. In another place the Apostle saith, 2 Thes. 1. 9. That the end of his coming shal be to render vengeance vnto them which know not God, and which obey not the Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ, wch shal be punished with euerlasting perdition, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Wo then vnto two sorts of men, the ignorant and the disobedient. For the Apostle saith flatly, they both shall bée damned. We thinketh both the ignorant & disobedient, and all other profane men should tremble

ble to thinke of this, that Christ shall come to render vengeance vnto them. If wee did certainely know, that the Spaniard should inuade our nation, ouer run it, and make a conquest of it, that he should shed our blood, destroy vs, and make a massacre amongst vs: yea, that wée should sée our wiues, our children, our kindred and deare friends slaine before our faces, so as their blood should streame in the stréets: what a wonderfull feare and terrour would it strike into vs? we would quake to think of it. Shall we not then be much more affraid of the damnation of our soules? Shall we not quake, to thinke that Christ shall come to take vengeance? If the Lion roar, all the beasts of the field tremble: and shal not we be affraid of the roaring of the Lion of the Tribe of Iudah? But alas, we are so hard hearted, and so rockt asléepe in the cradle of securitie, that nothing can mone vs, nothing can awake vs.

Phil. Now as you haue shewed vs the terror and end of Christs comming: so also declare the manner of it.

Theol. The manner of it is this: that the whole world shall be cited to appeare personally at the generall Assises, before the great Iudge. No man shall be admitted to appeare by his Attorny: but all must appeare personally. None shall be suffered to put in sureties: but all must

come in their owne persons, without baile or main-prize; as it is written, 2 Cor. 5. 10. Wee must all appear, high and low, rich and poor, king and begger, one and other: as it is plainly set down in the 20. chapter of the Reuelation, where the spirit saith, I saw the dead both great and small stand before God: and the sea gaue vp the dead which were in her, and death and hel deliuered vp the dead which were in them. So then it is cléere, that all, without exception, shall make their appearance at the great and dreadfull Assises. Oh what a great day will that bée, when as the whole world shal appeare together at once! If a King marry his son, and bid other Kings, Emperours, Dukes and Nobles to the marriage, with all their pompe & traine, we vse to say, Oh what a marriage, what a méeting, what a do, what a great day will there be? but when the vniuersall world shal be assembled together, not only all Monarks, Kings & Princes, but all other, that euer haue bin from the beginning of the world, all that are, and shall be; what a day will that be? No maruell therfore, though the Scriptures call it the day of God, and the great day of the Lord. Now then when all flesh is come together, to make their personal appearance, then shall the son of God ascend vnto his tribunall seat, with great Maiesty & glory. For a fiery streame shall issue and come forth before

him:

him: thousand thousand Angels shall accompany him, & minister vnto him: and ten thousand thousand shall stand before him: the iudgment shall be set, and the bookes opened, Dan. 7. 10. All the Saints also, & true worshippers of God shall attend him, and accompany him vnto his iudgement seat. And not onely so, but they shall sit vpon the Bench and Throne with him, as it is written, 1 Cor. 6. 2. The Saints shall iudge the world: they shall iudge the Angels: that is, the diuels, the Angels of darknesse. Our Lord Iesus himself doth auouch the same thing, when he said to his Disciples, and in them to all true Christians: Verily I say vnto you, that when the sonne of man shall sit in the Throne of his Maiestie, ye which followed mee in the regeneration, shall sit vpon twelue thrones, & iudge the twelue tribes of Israel, Mat. 19. 28. That is, the Saints of God shall beare witnesse, that the iudgement of Christ, and sentence of condemnation, which hee passeth against all vnbeleeuers, is according to iustice and equity. Thus then wee see how Christ shall bee accompanyed to his Throne, and with what glory and maiesty hee shall ascend vnto it. Experience teacheth, that when mortall Iudges hold their Sessions and generall Assises, they are brought vnto the Bench and iudgment seate with pompe and terrour. For the

Sheriffe of the Shyre, and Halbard-men, with many Iustices of Peace, and traines of others doe accompany them vnto the Bench. Then with how much more glory and maiestie shall the Sonne of God bee brought vnto his royall Throne? Thus then Christ being set vpon his iudgement seat, all the vngodly shall bee conuented before him, and he shall stand ouer them with a naked sword in his hand. The Diuell shall stand by them on the one side to accuse them, and their own conscience on the other side, and the gaping gulfe of hell vnderneath them, ready to deuour them. Then shall the bookes be opened, not any bookes of paper and parchment, but the bookes of mens consciences. For every mans sins are written and recorded in his conscience, as it were in a Register booke. Then will God bring every work to iudgement, with every secret thought, and set them in order before all the Reprobates. Then will God lighten the things that are hid in darknesse: and make the counsels of the heart manifest, 1 Cor. 4. 5. Then shall all the vngodly be arraigned, conuicted, and hold vp their hands at the barre of Christs tribunall seate, and shall cry guilty. Then shall that most dreadfull sentence of death and condemnation bee pronounced against them by the most righteous Iudge, Goe yee cursed into euerlasting fire, which is prepared for the Di-

uell

uell and his Angels, Mat. 25.41. Oh doleful sentence! Oh heauie hearing! Whose heart doth not tremble at these things? Whose haire doth not stand vp on their head? For then shal thousands, which in this world haue flourished as the Cedars of Libanus, be cast down for euermore; and shall drinke (as a iust recompence for their iniquitie) of the bitter cuppe of Gods eternall wrath & indignation in the kingdom of darknes, and in the fearfull presence of Satan, and all the cursed enemies of Gods grace.

Phil. Well, now as you haue declared vnto vs the terror, the suddennesse, the end, and the manner of Christs comming to iudgment, so lastly shew vs the right vse of all these things.

Theol. S. Peter telleth and teacheth vs the right vse of all: for saith he, 2 Pet. 3.11. Seeing all these things must be dissolued, what maner of persons ought we to be, in holy conuersation & godlinesse? As if he should say: Seeing the heauens shall passe away with a noise, the elements shall melt with heat, & the earth with the works that are therein, shall be burnt vp: seeing also the comming of Christ shall be with great terror, to a fearfull end, & in fearfull maner; O how ought we to excell in godnes? So then S. Peter telleth vs, that the true vse of all is this: that hereby we be brought nere vnto God, euen to be more obedient to his will, and to walk in all his com-

mandements, making conscience of all our waies, and studying to please God in all things, and to be fruitfull in all good workes, liuing soberly, iustly and holily in this present euil world, and shewing forth the vertues of him which hath called vs out of darknesse to this maruellous light: that so wee may be prepared against the day of his appearing, that it may not take vs tardie. For our life ought to be a continuall meditation of death, we should alwaies liue as if we should dye, or that our bed should be our graue: we must liue continually as if Christ should come to iudgement presently: as it is reported of a godly man in the primitiue Church, that whether he ate or dranke, or whatsoeuer he did, hee thought alwayes hee heard the trumpet of the Lord, with these words: Arise ye dead, & come vnto iudgement. But case it were certainely known, that Christ would come to iudgement the next Midsummer day; Oh what an alteration would it make in the world! how would men change their minds and affections! who would care for this world! who would set his heart vpon riches! who would regard braue apparell! who durst deceiue or oppresse! who durst be drunke! who durst sweare, lye, and commit adultery! May would not all men giue vp themselues to the obedience of God: would not all serue him diligently: would not all men and women flock

to

to Sermons? would they not giue themselues to prayer and reading? would they not repent them of their sins? would they not cry for mercy and forgiuenesse? See then what the knowledge of a certain day approaching would effect. And ought wee not to doe all these things with as great care and zeale, seeing the day is vncertaine? For who knoweth whether Christ will come this month, or the next; this yeare or the next? He himselfe saith, Mat. 24. 44. Be ready, watch, for in the houre that ye thinke not of, will the sonne of man come. We thinke he will not come this yeare, nor next yeare, nor this hundred yeares. It may be therfore that he will come suddenly vpon vs, wee know not how soone: For in an houre that we little thinke of will he come. Therefore our Sauiour saith in the 13. Chapter of Marke, verse 33. Take heed, watch and pray: for you know not when the time is. And in the Gospel of S. Luke he saith, Take heede that your hearts be not ouercome with surfetting & drunkennesse & the cares of this life; and so that day come vpon you vnawares. For as a snare shal it come vpon all them that dwel vpon the face of the earth, Luke 21. 34. We hear therfore how many watch-words & caueats our Sauiour giueth vs, when he saith, Be in a readinesse, awake, take heed, watch and pray, and loke about you, lest that day come

suddenly

suddenly vpon you, and take you napping. It standeth vs all therfore vpon, to be at an houres warning, vpon paine of death, and as we will answer it at our vttermost perill.

Phil. Proceed to speak of the torments of hel.

Theol. Concerning the torments of hell I doe note three things, which I will briefly speake of, and they be these: The extremity, perpetuity, and remedilesnesse thereof. First, touching the extremity thereof, it standeth specially in these three things. First, that it is a separation from all ioy and comfort of the presence of God. Secondly, that it is an eternall fellowship with the Diuell and his Angels. Thirdly, it is a feeling of the horrible wrath of God, which shall seize vpon body & soule, and shall feed on them (as fire doth vpon pitch and brimstone) for euer. The Scriptures do note the extremity of it, in calling it, A lake that burns with fire & brimstone for euer: in saying, there shalbe weeping & gnashing of teeth: in affirming that their worm dyeth not (meaning ye worme that gnaweth their conscience, or their torment of conscience) & the fire neuer goeth out: in tearming it, Tophet, which is deep & large, and the burning therof is fire and much wood: and that the breath of the Lord, as a riuer of brimstone, doth kindle it. All these things be terrible to our senses: and yet can they not fully expresse the thing as it is

Apoc. 21.8. Luke 13.28. Mark 9.44.

is indeed. For no heart can conceiue, or tongue expresse the greatnesse and extremity of the torments of hell. As the ioyes of heauen neuer entred into the heart of man: no more did the torments of hell. All the torments and troubles that fall vpon men in this life, are but the sparkles of the furnace of Gods totall wrath. All fires are but as it were pictures of fire, in comparison of hell fire. For, as one writeth, Hel fire is so extreamely hot, that it will burne vp a man seuen mile before he come at it. Yet the Reprobates being alwaies in it, shall neuer be consumed of it. As the Salamander is alwaies in the fire and neuer consumeth, so the wicked shal be alwaies in the fire of hell, & neuer consume. For hell is a death alwaies liuing, & an end alwaies beginning. It is a grieuous thing to a man that is very sick, to lye vpon a featherbed: how much more vpon a hot gridiron? but how most of all to burne alwaies in hel fire, and neuer be consumed? Another extremity of it consisteth in this, that the torments of hel are vniuersall: that is, in euery member at once; head, eyes, tongue, teeth, throat, stomack, back, belly, heart, Kidneys, &c. All punishments of this life are particular: For some are pained in their head, some in their backe, some in their stomacke, &c. yet some particular paines are such, as a man would not suffer to gaine all the world. But for a man to be

tormen-

mented in all parts at once, what sight more lamentable, who could but take pitty of a dog in the streete in that case! Thus then we see, that the extremitie of hell torments is greater than can bee conceiued or vttered. For, who can vtter that which is incomprehensible? We can go no further in comprehending that which is incomprehensible, than to know it to be incomprehensible.

Phil. As you haue shewed vs the extremity of hell torments, so now proceede to the perpetuitie.

Theol. The Scriptures doe set forth the perpetuity of hell torments, in saying, they are for euer. The wicked shall be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for euer. The fire neuer goeth out. When as many hundred thousand yeares are expired as there be stones by the Sea side, yet still there be so many more to come. For that which hath no end, can neuer come to an end. If all the Arithmeticians in the world were set a worke to do nothing but number all the daies of their life, euen the greatest numbers that they could possibly set down, and should in the end adde all their numbers together; yet could they neuer come any thing nere to that length of time wherein the wicked shall be tormented. If the whole circumference of the heauens were written about with figures

of Arithmeticke, from the East to the West, and from the West to the East againe; yet could it not containe that infinit time, and innumerable yéeres, wherein all vnbeléeuers shall suffer eternall torture. For in things infinite, time hath no place. For time is the measure of those things which are subiect to measure. Therefore because hell torments are infinite, they cannot bée measured by any time: neither can that which is infinite, bée diminished. For if you subtract from that which is infinite, tenne thousand thousand millions of millions, yet it is therby nothing diminished or made lesse. Put case a man should once in a hundred thousand yéeres, take a spoonfull of water out of the great Ocean sea, how long would it bée, ere he had so emptied it? Yet shall a man sooner empty the sea, by taking out a spoonfull once in a hundred thousand yéeres, than ý damned soule shall haue any ease. Therfore a certaine writer saith, If a damned soule might be tormented in hell but a thousand yeares, & then haue ease, there were some comfort in it: (for then there would be hope it would come to an end) but, saith he, this word *Euer* killeth the heart. Oh consider this ye that forget God. O yé carnall worldlings thinke on this in time: For if you will not now be moued in hearing, you shall be then crushed in péeces in feeling. What auaileth it to line in all

possible

possible pleasures, and carnall delights here, for some 60. yeares, and then to suffer this eternall torment? what shall it profit a man to win the whole world and lose his soule; they be more than mad, which will hazzard their soule for a little profit, and a few stinking pleasures. But this is the maner of men: they will haue the present swéet (come of it what will) though they pay neuer so deare for it: though they go to the highest price: though they lose their soules for it. Oh the unspeakeable blindnes & madnes of the men of this world! The diuell hath put out their eyes, & therefore leadeth them whither he list. For who
1 Sam. 11.2. cannot lead a blind man whither he list? Nahash the Ammonite would make no couenant with the Israelites, but vpon condition that he might put out all their right eies So the diuel doth conenant with all the wicked, to put out both their eyes; that hée may lead them directly into hel.

Phil. Now Sir, a word or two more of the remedilesnesse of hell fire.

Theol. The Scriptures do affirme, that as the torments of hel are extreame, so they are without all hope of remedy: as it is written, Psa. 49.8. A man can by no meanes redeem his brother: he cannot giue his ransome vnto God: so precious is the redemption of the soule, and the continuance for euer. To this purpose Abraham said to ye rich man, being in hell torments,

Luke

Luk. 16. 16. Betwixt you & vs, there is a great gulfe set, so that they wch would go from hence to you cannot, neither can they come from thence to vs. Our Lord Iesus also saith, Mat. 16 What shall a man giue for the recompence of his soule? Where our Sauiour doth plainely affirme, that there is no ransom or recompence, though neuer so great, to be giuen for a damned soule. For ye soule being in hel, can neuer bee released, it is past remedy, no meanes whatsoeuer can do any good: no gold, no siluer, no friends, no riches, no power, no policy, no flattery, no bribery, no reach, no fetch or deuice whatsoeuer can preuaile one iot; for a man being once in Hell hath no remedy, he is in close prison, hee is shut vp vnder the hatches for euer: there is no getting out againe, hee must suffer perpetuall imprisonment. Hee cannot bring a writ of false imprisonment: because he is laid in by the most righteous and iust Iudge, who cannot possibly doe any wrong, but he must lye by it. For being there once, he is there for euer. If all the Angels of heauen should intreate for a damned soule: If Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob should make great suite: If all the Prophets, Apostles & Martyrs should be continual solicitors of Christ for release: if the father should make request for his son, or the mother for the daughter: yet can none of these bee heard: they must all haue the

repulse.

repulse. For the sentence of Christ cannot bee reuersed, his decree is vnrepealeable. The due consideration of these things, may make all hearts to quake, and all knees to tremble. In the troubles and afflictions of this life though a man come in neuer so great danger, yet he may wind out againe, by one meanes or another, by money, or friendship, or rewards, or such like meanes: but in hell-fire, this is it that gripes, and maketh the heart despaire, that there is no remedy at all to be vsed. If wee should aske of a damned soule, or an afflicted conscience, what they would giue for the ease and redemption of their soules? they would answer, the whole world: howsoeuer secure worldlings, and wicked Atheists (which see nothing, or feele nothing) make nothing of it.

Here, by the way, let vs consider the greatnesse of the losse of a mans soule; which we shall the better perceiue and see into, if we can aright value and prize the soule. If therefore it bee demanded, what is the price of the soule, or what is it worth? Our Lord Iesus answereth: that it is more worth than all the world. For, saith he, What shal it profit a man to win all the
Mat. 16. world, and lose his soule? Therefore the soule of the poorest begger is more worth than all the world. Then I reason thus: If the soule bee more worth than all the world, then the losse of

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it is greater than the losse of the whole world. For, indeed it is a losse of all losses, an vnrecouerable losse. If a man should haue his house burnt ouer his head, and all that hee hath consumed in one night, it were a great losse. If a Merchant-venturer should lose twenty thousand pound in one venture, in one ship, or (as they say) in one bottome, it were a very great losse. If a King should lose his Crown and Kingdome, it were an exceeding great losse. But the losse of the soule is a thousand times more than all these: it is a matter of infinite importance. If a Tenant bee cast out of the fauour of his Land-lord it is a matter of griefe. If a Noble-mans Secretary be cast out of fauour with his Lord, so that hee taketh a pitch against him, it is a matter of great sorrow. If a Noble-man himselfe bee discountenanced, and cast out of all fauor with his Prince, that was in great fauour, it is a crosse, a heart-smart, and a matter of exceeding grieuance. But to be eternally separated from God, to be shut out of his fauour, and to be cast away from his presence, and the presence of his Angels, is a matter of infinite more dolour and torment. Marke then and behold, what a thing it is for a man to lose his soule. Oh therefore that men would bee wise in Gods feare, that they would look out in time, and make prouision for their soules. Now then to close vp

this whole point; the summe of all that hath bin said, is this, That the torments of hell are endlesse, easeless, and remediless.

Asun The laying open of these doctrines of hell-fire, and the iudgement to come, makes me quake and tremble: I am much therby perplexed. I feele great terrour in my conscience. I am affraid I shal be damned.

Antil. Damned, man! What speak you of damning? I am ashamed to hear you say so. For it is well knowne, that you are an honest man, a quiet liuer, a good neighbour, and as good a townesman as any in the parish where you dwell: and you haue beene alwaies so reputed and taken. If you should be damned, I know not who shal be saued.

Asun. I regard not your flatteries. I beleeue God: I beleeue his word: I beleeue those things which M. *Theologus* hath alledged out of the holy Scriptures, pointing me both to the chapter, and the verse: and whether it bee more meete that I should beleeeue the Scriptures, or your soothings, iudge you. No, no: Now I doe cleerly see by the glasse of Gods law, that my state is wretched and miserable. For I haue liued in sin and ignorance all the daies of my life, being vtterly voyd of all religion, and true knowledge of God. I am not the man indeed that you and others take me for. For, though out-

outwardly I haue liued honeſtly to the world-ward, yet inwardly I haue not liued religiouſly to God-ward.

Antil. Tuſh, tuſh: now I ſee you are in a melancholy humour. If you wil go home with me, I can giue you a ſpeedy remedy: for I haue many pleaſant and merry books, which if you ſhould heare them read, would ſoone remedy you of this melancholy paſſion. I haue the Court of *Venus*, the Palace of Pleaſure, *Beuis* of *Southhampton*, *Ellen of Rummin*: The merry ieſt of the Friar and the Boy: The pleaſant Story of *Clem* of the *Clough*, *Adam Bell*, and *William* of *Cloudeſly*: The odde tale of *William*, *Richard*, and *Humfrey*: The pretty conceit of *Iohn Splinters* laſt Wil and Teſtament: which all are excellent and ſingular bookes againſt heart-qualmes, and to remoue ſuch dumpiſhneſſe as I ſee you are now fallen into.

Aſun. Your vain & friuolous books of tales, ieſts, & lies would more increaſe my grief, & ſtrike the print of ſorow deeper into my hart.

Antil. Nay, if you be of that minde, I haue done with you.

Phil. I pray you, if a man may bee ſo bold with you: How came you by all theſe good bookes, I ſhould haue ſaid, ſo much traſh and rubbiſh?

Antil. What mattereth it to you? What haue

you to doe to enquire? But I pray you, Sir, what doe you meane to call them trash and rubbish?

Phil. Because they be no better. They bee goodly geer, trim stuffe. They are good to kindle a fire, or to scoure a hot ouen withall. And shall I tell you my opinion of them? I doe thus think, that they were deuised by the Diuell, seene & allowed by the Pope, printed in hel, bound vp by Hobgoblin, and first publisht and dispersed in Rome, Italie and Spaine; and all to this end, that therby men might be kept from the reading of the Scriptures. For, euen as a Lapwing, with her busie cry, draweth men away from her nest: so the Popish generation, by these fabulous deuices, draw men from the Scriptures.

Antil. Ah Sir: I see now, A fools bolt is soon shot. You are more precise than wise. The Vicar of Saint Fools shall be your ghostly father. What tell you me of your opinion? I would you should well know, I neither regard you nor your opinion. There bee wiser men than you, who both reade, allow, and take pleasure in these bookes.

Theol. Let him alone, good Philagathus: for you see what he is: there is no end of his crossing and cauilling. But he that is ignorant, let him bee ignorant: and he that is filthie, let

him bée more filthy. Let vs now turn our speech to Asunetus: for, I see he is heauie-hearted, and troubled in his minde. How do you Asunetus? how do you féele your selfe? Me thinkes you are very sad.

Asun. I am the better for you, Sir, I thank God: I neuer knew what sinne meant till this day. It hath pleased God now to giue me some sight and feeling thereof. I am greatly distressed in my conscience to thinke what I haue been. The remembrance of my former sinnes doth strike an horror into mé. When I consider how ignorantly and profanely, and how far off from God, I haue liued all my life; it stings and gripes me to the heart. I do now see that which I neuer saw, and feele that which I neuer felt. I do plainly see, that if I had died in that state wherein I haue liued all my life, I should certainly haue been condemned, and should haue perished for euer in my sinne and ignorance.

Theol. I am very glad that God hath opened your eyes, and giuen you the sight and féeling of your misery: which indéed is the very first step to eternal life. It is a great fauour and speciall mercy of God toward you, that he hath so touched your heart: you can neuer be thankfull enough for it. It is more than if you had a million of gold giuen you. It is the onely rare

priuiledge of Gods elect to haue the eies of their soules opened, that they may see into heauenly and spirituall things. As for the world, it is iust with God to leaue them in their blindnesse.

Asun. I do feele the burden of my sins, I am greatly grieued for them. I am weary of them. I am sorry that euer I sinned against God, or that I should bee such a wretch, as to incurre his displeasure, & prouoke his Maiesty against me. But I pray you, good M. *Theologus*, sith you are a spirituall Physician, & I am sick of sinne, that you would minister vnto me, out of Gods word, some spirituall physick and comfort.

Theol. Truely, I must néds think, that the promises of mercy, and forgiuenesse of sin made in the Gospell, doe belong vnto you, and that Iesus Christ is yours: you are truly interessed in him, and haue a proper right vnto him. For, hee came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. You do now feele your selfe to be a sinner: you are grieued for your sins: you are weary of them: therefore Iesus Christ is for you: all the benefits of his passion belong to you. Again he saith: The whole need not the Physician, but they that are sick, Mat. 9. 12. But you do acknowledge your selfe to be sick of sin: therefore Iesus Christ will be your Physician: he wil swaddle you: he will lap you: he will binde vp all your sores: he will heale all your wounds: he

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will anoint them with the oyle of his mercy: he will smile vpon you, & shew you a ioyfull countenance: he will say vnto you, Your sins are forgiuen.

In him you shall haue rest and peace to your soule. Through him you shal haue ease and comfort. For, hee takes pity of all such as mourne for their sinnes, as you doe. He biddeth you, and all that are in your case, to come vnto him, and he will help you. Come vnto me (saith he) all ye that are weary and heauy loaden, and I will ease you, Mat. 11. 28. You are one of them that are bidden to come: for, you are weary of your sinnes: you feele the burden of them: Christ is altogether for such as you are. He regardeth not the world, that is, the prophane and vnregenerate men. He bids not them come: he prayeth not for them. I pray not for the world (saith he) Iohn 18. 9. They haue no part nor interest in him. They haue nothing to doe with him, or with his merits and righteousnesse. He is only for the penitent sinner, and such as mourn for their sinnes. He is a pillow of Down to all aking heads, and aking consciences. Be of good comfort therfore, feare nothing: for, assuredly Christ & all his righteousnesse is yours. He will cloath you with it. He wil neuer impute your sins vnto you, or lay any of them to your charge: though they be neuer so many, or so great, he wil forget them, & forgiue

them. As he saith by the Prophet, Esay 1.18. Though your sins were as crimsin, they shal be made as white as snow: though they were red like scarlet, they shall be as wool. And again he saith by ye same Prophet, ca. 44.22. I haue put away thy transgressions as thick clouds, & thy sins as a mist. By another Prophet he saith, Mich. 7.19. He will lay aside our iniquities, & cast all our sins into the bottome of the sea. Againe he saith by ye Prophet, Esay 43.25. I, euen I, am he that put away thine iniquities for my own sake, & wil not remember thy sinnes. And yet more swétly he speakes to vs by the Prophet, Ier. 3.12. saying, Turn again vnto me, & I will not let my wrath fall vpon you. For, I am mercifull, & will not alway keep mine anger. And again by ye Prophet Hosea he saith, c. 11.6. I wil not execute the fiercenes of my wrath: I will not return to destroy Ephraim: For I am God, & not man. Be of good chéer therefore: comfort your self with these promises: you haue cause to reioice, séeing God hath wrought in you a dislike & a griefe for your sins: which is a certain token that your sins shal neuer hurt you: for, sins past cannot hurt vs, if sins present do not like vs. You are grown to an hatred & dislike of your sins: you mourn vnder the burden of them: therefore you are blessed. For blessed are they that mourne. Why therfore should you be so heauy & sad? remember

member that S. Iohn saith, 1 Ioh. 1. If any man sin, we haue an aduocate, Iesus Christ the righteous; & he is the reconciliation for our sins. S. Paul saith, Rom. 3. 25. that Iesus Christ is set forth to bee a reconciliation through faith in his blood. Again ye holy Ghost saith, Heb. 7. 25. He is perfectly able to saue all those that come vnto God by him, seeing he euer liueth to make intercession for vs. The Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 1. 30. He is made of God for vs wisdome, righteousnes, sanctification, & redemption. Marke that he saith, All is for vs, all is for his Church, for euery member of his Church, & therefore for you. Christ is made of God righteousnes, sanctification, & redemption for you: Christ is your Mediator, & your high Priest, & hath offered vp ye euerlasting sacrifice, euen for you, that he might pay your ransom, & redeem you from all iniquity. By his own blood hath he entred once into the holy place, & obtained eternal redemption for you. Christ is not entred into the holy places which are made with hands, which are similitudes of the true sanctuarie; but is entred into the very heauen, to appeare now in the sight of God for you. The Apostle saith, He hath made him to be sin for you, that knew no sin, that you might be made the righteousnes of God in him. Christ was made a curse for you, that hee might redeem you from the curse of the law. Wherefore

Heb. 9. 12.

Heb. 9. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Gal. 3. 13.

fore how happy art thou that hast such a Mediator & high Priest. Rest therefore wholly vpon him, and vpon that perfect, eternall, & propitiatory sacrifice which he hath once offered. Apply Christ, apply his merits, apply ẏ promises to your self, & to your owne conscience, so shall they doe you good, and bring great comfort to your soule. For put case you had a most excellent and soueraign salue, which would cure any wound if it were laid to: yet if you should lock it vp in your chest, & neuer apply it to your wound, what good could it do you? Even so the righteousnes & merits of Christ are a spirituall salue, which will cure any wound of the soule: but if we do not apply them to our selues by faith, they can doe vs no good. You must therefore apply Christ, and all the promises of the Gospel, to your selfe by faith, and stand fully perswaded, That whatsoeuer he hath done vpon the Crosse, he hath done for you particularly. For, what is the iustifying faith, but a full perswasion of Gods particular loue to vs vp Christ? The general and confused knowledge of Christ and his Gospel, auailes not to eternall life. Labour therefore to haue the true vse of all these great and precious promises: stick fast to Christ: for through him only we haue remission of sins, & eternall life. To him all the Prophets giue witnesse (saith S. Peter, Acts 10.45) that through his Name, all that beleeue shall receiue

ceiue remission of their sins. Where the Apostle tels vs, that if a great Iurie of Prophets were panelled to testifie of the way & means to eternall life, they would all, with one consent, bring in a verdit, that remission of sins & eternall life, are onely in Christ. Let vs heare the Foreman speak, & one or two of ye rest: for, in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall euery word stand. The Prophet Esay saith, He was wounded for our transgressions: he was broken for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was on him, & with his stripes we are healed, ca. 54. 5. This great Prophet, we see, plainly affirms, that Christ suffered for our sins, & by his suffering we are saued. The Prophet Ieremy testifies ye same thing, saying, Behold, the day is come (saith the Lord) that I will raise to *Dauid* a righteous branch, & a King shal raign & prosper, & shall execute iudgment & iustice in the earth. In his daies *Iudah* shal be saued, & *Israel* shall dwell safely: & this is the name wherby they shal cal him, The Lord our righteousnes, Ier. 23. 5. This Prophet iumps with ye other. For he saith, that Christ is ye righteous branch, and that hee is our righteousnes: which is all one as if he had said, our sins are pardon'd only through him, & through him we are made righteous. Moreouer he affirmes, ye Iuda & Israel, that is, the Church, shalbe saued by him The Prophet Zacharie, that I may speake

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it with reuerence, telleth the same tale word for word. He auoucheth the same thing with the other two Prophets: for he saith, Zach.13.1. In that day a fountain shal be opened to the house of Dauid, & to the inhabitants of Ierusalem, for sin, and for vncleannesse. The meaning of the Prophet is, that, In the dates of Christs Kingdome, the fountaine of Gods mercy, in Christ, should be opened and let-out to wash away the sinnes and vncleannesse of the Church. So then wée see, that these thrée great witnesses doe all agrée in this, that, Through Christ only we are washed from our sinnes, and through him only we are made righteous. Seeing then that eternall life is only in the Son, therefore he that hath the Son, hath life. Be of good courage therefore, O Asuetus: for, no doubt, you haue the Son, and therefore eternall life. Fear not your sins, for they cannot hurt you: for, as all the righteousnes of Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, and all the most righteous men that euer lived on the face of the earth, if it were yours, could doe you no good without Christ: so all the sin in the world can do you no hurt, being in Christ. For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Iesus, Rom.8.1. Pluck vp a good heart therefore: be no more heauy and sad: for if you be found in Christ, clothed with his perfect righteousnesse, (being made yours through faith) what can the

diuell say to you? what can the Law do? They may wel hisse at you, but they cannot sting you: they may grin at you, but they cannot hurt you. For who shal say any thing to ye charge of Gods Elect? Rom.8.33. It is God that iustifies, who shall condemn? It is Christ which is dead, or rather which is risen again; who is also at the right hand of God, and makes request for vs. Reioice in the Lord therefore, again I say, Reioice, Phil. 4.4. For greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world: our Lord Iesus is stronger than all. None can pluck you out of his hands: he is a strong Mediator: he hath conquerd all our spirituall enemies: he hath euercome hell, death, & damnation: he hath led captinity captiue: he hath spoiled principalities and powers, and hath made an open shew of them, & triumphed ouer them in his crosse. He hath most triumphantly said, O death, I wil be thy death: ô graue, I wil be thy destruction. O death, where is thy sting? O hell, where is thy victorie? Seeing then you haue such a Mediatour and high Priest, as hath conquerd the hellish army, & subdued all infernall power, what need you to doubt? what need you to fear any more? Moreouer, you are to vnderstand, and to be persuaded, that Gods mercy is exceeding great towards penitent sinners, & all such as mourne for their transgressions: according as he saith, Eze.18. At what time soeuer a sin-

Col.2. 15.

Hos.13. 14.

1 Cor. 15.55.

a sinner doth repent him of his sins from the bottome of his heart, he will put them all out of his remembrance. The Prophet Dauid doth most liuely and fully describe vnto vs, the mercifull nature of God, in the 103. Psalme, where he saith: The Lord is full of compassion, and mercy, slow to anger, & of great kindness: he wil not alwaies chide, neither keepeth his anger for euer: he hath not dealt with vs after our sins, nor rewarded vs according to our iniquities. For as high as the heauen is aboue the earth, so great is his mercy towards those that fear him. As far as is the east from the west, so far hath he remoued our sins from vs. As a Father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that feare him. For he knows wherof we be made, he remembreth that we are but dust. The History of the lost son doth most notably set forth ẏ wonderful mercy of God towards penitent sinners. There is shewed how the Lord doth embrace, tender & make much of such poore sinners, as haue broken & contrite hearts for their sinnes: for it is said, that when the Father saw his repenting son a great way off, he had compassion on him, and ran, and fell on his necke, and kissed him, and cloathed him with the best robe, put it on him, put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and caused the fat calfe to be killed for him. Euen so

Luk. 15

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the euerlasting Father doth reioyce at the conuersion of any of his lost sons. Yea, there is ioy in the presence of the Angels of God, for one sinner that conuerteth. Moreouer, the Lord most liuely expresseth his merciſull nature and disposition in this, That he is very loth we should perish, & willingly cast away our selues. Therefore often in the holy Scriptures he mourns for vs, bewailes our wretchednes, & takes vp many pitiſull complaints & lamentations for vs, saying, O that my people had hearkned vnto me, and Israel had walked in my waies, Psal. 81. 13. And againe, O that thou hadst hearkned vnto my commandements: then had thy prosperity bin as the floud, & thy righteousnes as the waues of the sea, Esa. 48. 18. Again he mourningly complains by his Prophet Hosea, saying, O Ephraim, what shal I do to thee? ô Iudah, how shal I intreat thee? And in another place, What could I do more to my vineyard, that I haue not don? Esay 5. Mark here how compassionately the Almighty God doth yearne euer vs, and euen as it were bleed vpon our wounds. The Apostle also notes the rich mercy & maruellous loue of God to mankinde in this, that he doth beseech vs and pray vs by the Ministers of the Gospel, that we would be reconciled vnto him. The words are these, Now then are we embassadors for Christ: as though God did beseech you through vs, we

Hos 6. 4

2 Cor. 5

pray

pray you, in Christs stead, that you be reconciled vnto God. Is it not a strange thing, that the omnipotent God should fall to entreating of vs poore wretches? It is all one, as if a King should intreat a begger, whom hée may will and command. But the abundant mercy of God towards mankind doth most of all consist in this, That he hath giuen his only Son for vs, when wee were his enemies; as it is written, Iohn 3. God so loued the world, that he hath giuen his onely begotten Son, that whosoeuer beleeues in him, should not perish, but haue euerlasting life. Again, God sets out his loue towards vs, seeing that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for vs: much more then beeing now iustified by his bloud, we shalbe saued from wrath through him. For, if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Sonne: much more being reconciled, we shal be saued by his life, Rom. 5. 1. In all this then wée may cléerly behold the infinit mercy of God towards vs poore sinners. For, is it not a great matter, that ẏ Son of God should take our nature vpon him, should be so abased as he was, and should
Phil. 2. 8 humble himselfe to death, euen to ẏ death of the crosse? For, as ẏ shadow of ẏ diall went back ten degrées, that Ezechias might receiue length of daies, & much happines: so Christ, ẏ Son of righteousnes, hath gone back many degrées, that we

might

might haue eternall life. His humiliation therefore is our exaltation; his sufferings, our ioy; his death, our life. For, we haue no other remedy or refuge, but only his merits and righteousnes. He is our city of refuge, whither we must flée, & there we must take sanctuary. He is the Balm of Gilead, Ier, 9. whereby our soules are cured. He is that pool of Bethesda, Ioh. 5. 2. where euery man may be cured of what disease soeuer hée hath. He is the riuer of Iordan, where Naaman may wash away all his leprosie, 2 Kings 5. He is that Pelican, who by pecking a hole in his own breast, doth restore his young to life again by his blood. Yet one thing we must note by the way, which hath bẽn partly touched before, that all the mercies of God, and merits of Christ, are to be restrained onely to the Elect, onely to the true members of the Church; as plainly appeareth in the 103. Psal. where the mercies of God, which are there largely described, are restrained only to them that feare him, kéep his couenant, and think vpon his commandments to do them. And touching Christ it is said, that he is a Prince and a Sauiour vnto Israel, & that he shal redém Israel from all his iniquities, Psal. 130. Again it is written, that Christ, being consecrate, was made the Authour of eternall salmation to them that obey him, Heb. 5 6. None doe or can obey him, but onely the Elect: therefore he is the au-

thour of saluation only to the Elect. And consequently, the profane world, whatsoeuer they say, whatsoeuer they brag & boast, haue no true title or interest in him. This thing was figured in the Law, in this, that the Mercy-seat, which was a type of Gods mercy in Christ, and ẏ Ark, which was a figure of the Church, were by the expresse commandement of God fitted each to other, both in length and breadth, Exod. 25.10. For, as the Ark was two cubits & a halfe long, and a cubit and a halfe broad: iust so was the Mercy-seat. Noting thereby, that the mercy of God in Christ should only be fitted to his church, and belong onely to the Church; so as not one without the Church should be saued. For he that hath not the Church for his Mother, cannot haue God for his Father. Lastly, we are to obserue, that as God is infinite in mercie, and of great compassion toward penitent sinners: so also is he most constant in the course of his mercies towards his children. And therefore one of the Psalms carries this note, His mercy endureth for euer: his mercy endureth for euer: his mercy endureth for euer, Psal. 136. Noting therby both the constancy and eternity of Gods mercy. To the same purpose it is thus written: It is the Lords mercies that we are not consumed: it is because his compassions faile not, Lam. 3. 22. Let vs know therefore, that God, as touching

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his mercy to his children, is of a most constant and vnchangeable nature. As he saith, I am the Lord, I change not. For, if God were of a changeable nature as we are, & subiect to passions, then were we in a most miserable case: then must he needs smite vs downe, and take vengeance of vs euery day, and euery hour in the day, because we prouoke him euery day, and euery houre in the day. But the God of heauen is not as a man, that he should be subiect to passions & affections: he is of a most constant and immutable nature. For, though we prouoke him euery day with new sinnes, yet is he so farre off from taking reuenge, that the next day he rewardeth vs with new mercies, and breaketh through all our vnkindnesse, to shew kindnes vnto vs; and through all our naughtinesse, to do vs good. All our infirmities cannot make him breake off with vs, or cease to loue vs. He is content to take vs with all faults, and to loue vs dearely, though wée haue great faults. Hée regardeth not our infirmities: though we bée oftentimes weyward and eluish, yet for all that he loueth vs neuertheleſſe. Euen as a louing mother, though her young suckling cry all the night, and be exceeding trease and weyward, so as she cannot rest an houre in the night, yea, though shée endure much lothsonnesse and trouble with it, yet in the morning when she ariseth, she loueth

it neuertheleſſe; but dandleth it, playeth with it, ſmileth and laugheth vpon it: ſo the God of all mercies, whoſe loue towards vs farre paſſeth the loue of mothers, though wee grieue him with our infirmities continually, yet loueth vs neuertheleſſe, and is content to put vp all, to forget and forgiue all; for, hee is a moſt conſtant louer. Where he once ſets and ſettles his loue, he loueth moſt conſtantly: nothing can alter him, nothing can remoue him. Euen as a Father, when his little childe catcheth a fall, breaketh his ſhinnes, and hurteth his face, is ſo far from being offended or diſpleaſed with him therefore, that he doth pity him, and bemone him, ſeeking remedies for his hurt: ſo our merciſull Father is ſo farre off from beeing angry and diſpleaſed with vs for ſome ſlips and fals, that hee doth the more pity vs and lament our raſe. Euen as a louing and wiſe husband, although his wife haue many infirmities, yet being aſſured ſhe loues him dearely, and that her heart is with him, he is well content to wink at all her faults, to hide them, to beare with them, yea, and to make nothing of them, louing her no whit the leſſe for them: ſo our dear husband and Spouſe Chriſt Jeſus, becauſe hee knoweth wee loue him, and that he hath our hearts, is content to beare with all our infirmities, and to make light of them. For this cauſe it is that he ſaith to

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his Spouse in the Canticles, Though shee was blacke and full of infirmities, behold thou art all fair, my Loue: behold, thou art fair: thou art all faire, my Loue: there is no spot in thee, Cant. 4. 1. 7. Marke, that hee calleth his Church fair, all fair, and without spot; not because shee was so in her selfe, but because she was made so in him: and assuredly the eternall God, beholding her in his Son, doth so esteem & account of her. For, as hee that beholdeth any thing through a red glasse, doth take it to be red, as is the colour of the glasse: so God the Father, beholding vs in his Sonne, doth take vs to be of the same nature & quality that he is; that is, perfectly righteous. For this cause it is that he loueth vs, and setteth his heart vpon vs, and will not be removed from vs. For, his loue to his children is alwayes one and the same, although we haue not alwayes the like sight and feeling of it: as the Moone is alwayes the same in substance and quantitie, though sometimes it seemeth vnto vs to be wasted into a very small scantling. Let vs know then to our great comfort, that the loue of God towards vs, in his deare Son, is constant, and alwayes alike; and that he will not discountenance vs, or shake vs off for some infirmities, no nor yet for many infirmities: for, the merciful God doth accept of his children, because their generall care is good, and the vniuersall Tenor

of their life tendeth vnto righteousnes, howsoeuer they may greatly faile in many particular actions. Two or thrée fittes of an ague doe not proue a diseased body; nor two or thrée good dayes, a sound body: euen so some few infirmities doe not argue a wicked man; nor two or thrée good actions, a good man: but we must haue an eye to the certaine and settled course of a mans life. Euen as men are truely said to walke in a way, when they go in it, although sometimes they trippe and stumble: so GODs children doe walk in the way of righteousnes, although sometimes they stumble and step out of it, or sometimes be violently haled out of it by theeues. For, Satan and the violence of our lusts do often hale vs out of the way: but we must gette into it again as sone as we are escaped. Now then to conclude and draw to an end. sith God is so infinitely mercifull, and constant in his mercy: sith such great and precious promises are made to vs in Christ: sith the Lord doth not regard our infirmities when our hearts are with him: therefore O Asuerus, be of good cheere, let nothing trouble you, feare not the assaults of the Diuell, regard not his temptations: for, assuredly your sinnes are forgiuen. Christ is yours: heauen is yours: and all the promises of life and saluation belong vnto you. So as you need not doubt, you cannot mis-

miscarry: your name is written in the Booke of life.

Asw. I am greatly comforted and cheered vp with your words. Your preaching of the Gospell, and laying open of Gods aboundant mercy in Christ, and of the promises, do exceedingly reuiue me, and euen as it were put new life into me: they are as Sack and Sugar vnto my soule, and sweeter than the honey and the hony-combe: they are as physicke to my sick soule, and as ointment to my spiritual wounds. I doe now begin to see what misery is in man, and what mercy is in God. And I know by wofull experience, that where misery is not felt, there mercy is not regarded: but now it hath pleased God to giue me some feeling of mine own wretchednes and misery, and yet with good comfort in his mercy. For, I thank God for it, I begin now to grow to some perswasion, that the promises do belong vnto me, my sins are forgiuen, & that I am one of them that shall be saued.

Theol. I doe greatly reioyce, that God hath, according to his rich mercy, wrought this good worke in you. I doe, from the bottome of my heart, giue him the praise and glory of it. Happy are you that euer you were borne, in whom the Lord hath wrought so gracious a worke. It is his high fauour and speciall mercy to-

wards you: for, it is the onely priuiledge and prerogatiue royall of GODS own children, Truely to repent and beleeue. I beseech God therefore to encrease your faith, and to fill you full of ioy and peace in beleeuing, that you may abound in hope, through the power of the holy Ghost.

Antil. The Sun drawes low, *Asunetus*: it is time for you and me to be going.

Phil. Indeede the night will approach by and by: and therefore we must of necessitie breake off.

Theol. Sith it is so, wee will here surcease, and go no further.

Asun. Sir, I wil now take my leaue of you: I can neuer bee thankefull enough for all the good instructions and comforts which I haue heard from you this day. I hope I shal remember some of them whilst I liue. I do therfore praise God for you, and for your counsell, and for this day; which I hope shall be the first day of my repentance and true conuersion vnto God.

Theol. The Lord for his infinite mercies sake grant it. And I most humbly beseech ye Almighty God to establish you with his free spirit, that you may proceed and goe forward in a Christian course vnto the end.

Phil. I pray you, good *M. Theologus*, pardon my

my bouldneſſe: for you ſee I haue beene very bold to propound many queſtions vnto you, wherein you haue fully ſatisfied mee, to the great ioy and comfort of my ſoule. I do therfore praiſe God for you: and I hope I ſhal neuer forget ſome things which you haue vttered. But I will now commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, wch is able to build vs further.

Theol. Farewell, good Philagathus. **The Lord bleſſe you, and keep you in all your wayes: and the God of heauen preſerue vs all, and continue vs in his feare vnto the end.**

All glory be giuen to God.

FINIS.

A Table conteining all the principall matters *conteined in this Booke, and directing to the Page where they are set down.*

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FINIS.

A Morning prayer to be vſed in priuate families.

Lord our God, & heauenly Father, wee thy vnworthy children do here come into thy moſt holy and heauenly preſence, to giue thee praiſe and glory, for all thy great mercies and manifold bleſſings towards vs; eſpecially for that thou haſt preſerued vs this night paſt from all the dangers and feares thereof; haſt giuen vs quiet reſt to our bodies, and brought vs now ſafely to the beginning of this day, and doeſt now afreſh renew all thy mercies vpon vs, as the Eagle renueth her bill: giuing vs all things abundantly to enioy; as food, raiment, health, peace, liberty and freedome from many miſeries, diſeaſes, caſualties and calamities which wee are ſubiect to in this life, euery minute of an houre: and not onely ſo, but alſo for vouchſafing vnto vs many good things, not onely for neceſſity, but euen for delight alſo. But aboue all (deare Father) wee praiſe thy name for the bleſſings of a better life, ſpecially for thy moſt holy Word and Sacraments, and all the

good we enioy thereby; for the continuance of the Gospell amongst vs, for the death of thy Sonne, and all that happinesse which wee haue thereby; also because thou hast chosen vs to life before wee were, and that of thy meere goodnesse and vndeserued fauour towards vs; and hast called vs in thine appointed time, iustified vs by thy grace, and sanctified vs by thy spirit, and adopted vs to be thine owne Children and heires apparent to the great Crown. O Lord open our eyes euery day more and more, to see and consider of thy great and maruellous loue to vs in all these things; that by the due consideration thereof, our hearts may bee drawne yet neerer vnto thee, euen more to loue thee, feare thee, and obey thee: that as thou art enlarged towards vs in mercy, so we may be enlarged towards thee in thanksgiuing: and as thou doest abound towards vs in goodnesse, so we may abound towards thee in obedience & loue. And Sith (deare Father) thou art neuer weary of doing vs good, notwithstanding all our vnworthinesse and haughtinesse: therefore let the consideration of thy great mercy and fatherly kindnesse towards vs, euen as it were force our hearts, and compell vs to come into thy most glorious presence with new songs of thanksgiuing in our mouths. We pray thee (O most mercifull God) to forgiue all our vnthankfulnesse

fulneſſe, vnkindneſſe, prophaneneſſe, and great abuſing of all thy mercies; and ſpecially our abuſe and contempt of thy Goſpell, together with all other the ſins of our life, which we confeſſe are inumerable, and more than can be reckoned vp, both in omiſſion of good things, and commiſſion of euill. We moſt humbly intreat thee to ſet them all ouer to the reckoning which thy Son Chriſt hath made vp for them vpon his croſſe, and neuer to lay any of them to our charge: but freely forget all, and forgiue all. Naile down all our ſinnes and iniquities to the croſſe of Chriſt, burie them in his death, bathe them in his bloud, hide them in his wounds, let them neuer riſe vp in iudgement againſt vs. Set vs free of the miſeries that are vpon vs for ſinne, and keepe back the iudgements to come, both of ſoule, bodie, goods and good name; Be reconciled vnto vs in thy deare Son, concerning all matters paſt, not once remembring or repeating vnto vs our old & abominable iniquities, but accept vs as righteous in him, imputing his righteouſneſſe to vs, and our ſinnes to him. Let his righteouſneſſe ſatisfie thy iuſtice for all our vnrighteouſneſſe, his obedience for our diſobedience, his perfection for our imperfection. Moreouer, we humbly beſeech thy good Maieſty to giue vs the true ſight & feeling of our manifold ſins, ⁊ wee

may not be blinded in them through delight, or hardned in them through custom, as the reprobates are; but that we may bee euen weary of them, and much grieued for them, labouring & striuing by all possible means to get out of them. Good father touch our hearts with true repentance for all sinne. Let not vs take any delight or pleasure in any sinne: but howsoeuer we fall through frailtie (as we fall often) let vs neuer fall finally, let vs neuer ly down in sin, nor continue in sin, but let vs get vp on our feet again, and turne to thee with all our hearts, and seeke thee while thou maist be found, and whilest thou dost offer grace and mercy vnto vs. O Lord increase in vs that true and liuely faith whereby we may lay sure hold on thy Sonne Christ, and rest vpon his merits altogether. Giue vs faith assuredly to beleeue all thy great & precious Promises made in the Gospell, and strengthen vs from aboue to walke and abound in all the true & sound fruits of faith. Let vs walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. Let vs feel the power of thy Sonnes death killing sinne in our mortall bodies, and the power of his resurrection raising vs vp to newnes of life. Let vs grow daily in the sanctification of the spirit, and the mortification of the flesh. Let vs liue holy, iustly and soberly in this present euill world, shewing forth the vertues of thee in all our particu-

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lar actions, that we may adorne our most holy profession, and shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and froward generation amongst whom we liue, being gainfull to all by our liues and conuersation, & offensiue to none. To this end we pray thee fill vs with thy spirit, & all spirituall graces: as loue, wisdome, patience, contentment, meekenesse, humility temperance, chastity, kindnesse, and affability; and stir vs vp to vse prayer and watchfulnes, reading and meditation in thy Law, and all other good meanes wherby we may grow & abound in all heauenly vertues. Blesse vs in the vse of the meanes, from day to day: make vs such as thou wouldest haue vs to be, and such as we desire to be: worke in vs both will and deed, purpose and power. For thou O Lord, art all in all, thou wilt haue mercy vpon whom thou wilt haue mercy: & whom thou wilt thou hardnest. Haue mercy vpon vs therefore (deare Father) and neuer leaue vs to our selues, nor to our owne wils, lusts, and desires, but assist vs with thy good spirit, that we may continue to the end in a righteous course; that so at length we may be receiued into glory, and bee partakers of that immortall crowne which thou hast laid vp for all that loue thee, and truely call vpon thee.

Further we intreate thee, O heauenly father, to giue vs all things necessary for this life: as

food, raiment, health, peace, liberty, and such freedome from those manifold miseries which we lie open vnto euery day, as thou seest meet. Blesse vnto vs all the meanes which thou hast put into our hands for the sustenance of this fraile life. Blesse our flock and store, corne and cattell, trades and occupations, & all the works of our hands: for thy blessing only makes rich, & it bringeth no sorrows with it. Giue vs therfore such a competency & sufficiency of these outward blessings as thou in thy heauenly wisedome seest most needfull for vs. Moreouer, we humbly beseech thee (most louing Father) in great mercy looke downe from heauen vpon thy whole Church, and euery member of it. Be fauourable vnto *Sion*, and build vp the walls of *Hierusalem*. Behold with the eye of pitie, the great ruines & desolation of thy Church. Heale vp the wounds, and make vp the breaches thereof in all nations. Regard it as thine owne flocke, tender it as thine owne family, dresse it as thine owne Vineyard, loue it as thine owne Spouse. Thinke thoughts of peace to it, & alwaies looke vpon it in deep compassion. Blesse it with thy grace, guide it with thy spirit, & defend it still with thy mighty power: scatter the deuices, cõfound the coũcels, & ouerthrow the forces of all that fight against it. Specially wee intreat thee (dear father) to set thy self against ye

Antichrist

Antichrist of *Rome*, that man of perdition, wch setteth himselfe against thee, and against all thy people. In thine appointed time: we pray thee giue him a deadly downe-fall. Beat downe all his power and authority daily more and more; giue free passage to thy Gospel in all kingdoms, that *Babylon* may fall, and neuer rise vp againe. The more the fauorites and adherents of *Rome* labour to vphold their Idolatrous kingdome, ꝑ more let it fall down, euen *Dagon* before the presence of thine Arke. Powre down the Vials of the fulnesse of thy wrath vpon the kingdome of the Beast; and let their riches, wealth, credit and authoritie dry vp euery day more and more, as the riuer *Euphrates*. Let it pitie thee, O Father, to see thine owne Spouse sit as a deformed and forlorne woman heere below, weeping and mourning with her haire about her neck, hauing lost all her beauty and comelinesse: cheere her vp (deare Father) glad her with the ioy of thy countenance, and so decke her, and trimme her vp, that thou maiest delight in her, as a Bridegroome in his Bride. Specially wee intreat thee haue mercy vpon thy Church in this Land: intend good vnto vs, and not euill: giue vs not ouer into the hands of the cruell *Spaniard*, as our sinnes haue deserued. Scatter we pray thee, O Lord, the deuices, and breake the plots of all such as haue plotted

ꝑ ouerthrow & vtter ſubuerſion of this Church and common-wealth. Bleſſe this Church more and more, with the continuance of true Religion amongſt vs: for thy great Names ſake, and infinite mercies ſake, deale graciouſly & fauourably with vs, and our poſterity. Turne from vs that vengeance which is due to vs for our ſins. For thou ſeeſt how iniquitie prenaileth, & the wicked go away with the goale: Atheiſme ouerſpreadeth euery where, & Popery ſeemeth to get a head againe. Now therefore (deare Father) we moſt humbly beſeech thee to take order ſpeedily for the remedying & repreſſing of theſe manifold diſorders and grieuous enormities that are amongſt vs. Be intreated of thy poor children to be good to this Engliſh nation. Heare the cries of thine elect: hear the mourning of them that mourn in Sion. Let the cries of thy children cry down all the cries of the ſins of the land, & be reconciled vnto vs in the multitude of thy compaſsions; that ſo thou maiſt ſtill continue a moſt merciful protector of this thine Engliſh vineyard. We pray thee (good Father) ſhew ſpeciall mercy to our moſt Noble & gracious *K. Charles*, thine anointed ſeruant: bleſs him & keepe him in all his waies, bleſſe his gouernment vnto vs. Let thine Angels encamp about him, & let thy holy hand be alwaies ouer him: keep him from treaſons, & deliuer him from the

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treacheries of his enemies: giue him to ſee what belongs to his peace, & giue him a hart earneſtly bent to ſet vpon the practice of the ſame: giue him all graces neceſſary for his place, & neceſſary for his ſaluation: continue his gouernment peaceable & proſperous amongſt vs: & as thou haſt made him ꝑ breath of our noſtrils, & a gracious inſtrument for the ſauing of many thouſand ſoules, ſo let his owne ſoule be ſaued in the day of thy Son Chriſt. Bleſs his Maieſties moſt honourable priuy Councellors, and giue ſuch good ſucceſſe vnto all their counſels and policies in matters of State, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godlineſſe and honeſty. Bleſſe all the Nobility, work in them a care to glorifie thy name in their places; make them faithful to thee, and faithfull to the Land. Direct with thy good ſpirit all ſuch as bear the ſword of iuſtice, that they may draw it out to puniſh the wicked, and to defend the godly; and that they may with all good care and conſcience diſcharge the duties of their places. Increaſe the number of faithfull and zealous Miniſters in this church. Send thy Goſpell to thoſe places where it is not, and bleſſe it where it is. Remember them in thy mercy, O Lord, that are vnder any croſſe or affliction whatſoeuer: be comfortable vnto them, heal vp their wounds, bind vp their ſores, put all their teares into thy

bottle,

bottle, and make their bed in all their sorrows, and put such a good end to all their troubles that they may redound to thy glory, and the furtherance of their owne saluation. In ꝑ mean time, giue them patience & constancy to beare whatsoeuer it shall please thy mercifull hand to lay vpon thē. Last of all, in a word, we pray thee blesse Magistracy, Ministry, and Commonaltie. Blesse all thy people; doe good to all that are true & vpright in their hearts. And so (deare father) we do commit & commend our selues, our soules and bodies into thy hands, for this day & the rest of our life, praying thee to take care and charge of vs; keep vs from all euill, watch ouer vs for our good, let thine angels encamp about vs, let thy holy hand be ouer vs, and keep vs in al our waies, that we may liue to thy praise and glory heere in earth, keeping faith and a good conscience in all our actions; that after this life we may be crowned of thee for euer in thy kingdome. Grant these things (good father) to vs here presēt, & to all thine, absent; praying thee in special fauour to remember our friends, & kinsfolks in the flesh, all our good neighbors and wel-willers, and all those for whom we are bound to pray by nature, by deserts, or any duty whatsoeuer, for Iesus Christs sake our onely Mediatour; to whom with thee, and the holy Ghost, be giuen all praise and glory, both now and for euermore. *Amen.*

An

An Euening Prayer to be vſed *in Priuate families.*

O Eternall God, and our moſt louing and deare Father, we thy vnworthy children do here fall down at the foote of thy great Maieſtie, acknowledging from our hearts that we are altogether vnworthy to come neere thee, or to looke towards thee, becauſe thou art a God of infinite glory, and we are moſt vile & abhominable ſinners, ſuch as were conceiued and borne in ſinne and corruption, and ſuch as haue inherited our fathers corruptions, and alſo haue actually tranſgreſſed all thy holy ſtatutes and lawes, both in thoughts, words and deedes: before we knew thee and ſince, ſecretly and openly, with our ſelues and with others: our particular ſinnes are moe than can be numbred for who knoweth how often he offendeth? but this we muſt needs confeſſe againſt our ſelues, that our hearts are full of pride, couetouſneſſe, and the loue of this world,

full

full of wrath, anger, and impatience, full of lying, dissembling, and deceiuing, full of vanitie, hardnesse, and prophanenesse, full of infidelitie, distrust, and selfe-loue, full of lust, vncleannesse, and all abhominable desires: yea our hearts are the very sinkes of sinne, and dunghils of all filthinesse. And besides all this, we doe omit the good things we should doe: for there are in vs great wants of faith, of loue, of zeale, of patience, of contentment, and of euery good grace; so as thou hast iust cause to proceed to sentence of iudgement against vs, as most damnable transgressors of all thy holy commandements: yea such as are sunke in our rebellions, and haue many times & often committed high treason against thy maiesty; and therfore thou maist iustly cast vs all down into hell fire, there to be tormented with Sathan and his Angels for euer. And we haue nothing to except against thy Maiesty for so doing; sith therin thou shouldest deale with vs but according to equity, and our iust deserts. Wherefore, dear Father, we do appeale from thy iustice to thy mercy, most humbly intreating thee to haue mercy vpon vs, and freely to forgiue vs all our sinnes past whatsoeuer, both new and old, secret and open, known and vnknown, and that for Iesus Christs sake our only mediator. And we pray thee touch our hearts with true griefe, & vnfained repentance

for

for them, that they may be a matter of continuall ſorrow and heart-ſmart vnto vs, ſo as nothing may grieue vs more than this, that wee haue offended thee, being our ſpeciall friend and Father. Giue vs therefore (deare Father) euery day more and more ſight and feeling of our ſins with true humiliation vnder the ſame. Giue vs alſo that true and liuely faith, whereby we may lay ſure hold on thy Sonne Chriſt, and all his merits, applying the ſame to our owne ſoules; ſo as we may ſtand fully perſwaded, that what ſoeuer he hath done vpō the croſſe, he hath done for vs particularly, as well as for others. Giue vs faith (good Father) conſtantly to beleeue all the ſweet promiſes of the Goſpell, touching remiſſion of ſin, and eternall life, made in thy Son Chriſt. O Lord increaſe our faith, that we may altogether reſt vpon thy promiſes, which are all Yea and Amen. Yea, that we may ſettle our ſelues, and all that we haue, wholly vpon them; both our ſoules, bodies, goods, name, wiues, children, & our whole eſtate: knowing that all things depend vpon thy promiſes, power, and prouidence, and that thy word doth ſupport and beare vp the whole order of nature. Moreouer we intreat thee, O Lord, to ſtrengthen vs from aboue, to walke in euery good way and to bring forth the fruits of true faith in all our particular actions, ſtudying to pleaſe thee in all things,

and

and to befruitfull in good workes, that we may ſhew forth vnto all men by our good conuerſation whoſe children we are: & that we may adorn and beautifie our moſt holy profeſſion, by walking in a Chriſtian courſe, and in all the ſound fruits and practice of godlineſſe and true Religion. To this end we pray thee ſanctifie our hearts by thy ſpirit, yet more and more: ſanctifie our ſoules and bodies, and all our corrupt naturall faculties, as reaſon, vnderſtanding, will, and affections, ſo as they may be fitted for thy worſhip and ſeruice, taking a delight and pleaſure therein. Stirre vs vp to vſe Prayer, watchfulneſſe, reading, meditation in thy Law, and all other good meanes wherby we may profit in grace and goodnes from day to day. Bleſſe vs in the vſe of the meanes, that we may daily die to ſin, and liue to righteouſnes: draw vs yet neerer vnto thee: helpe vs againſt our manifold wants. Amend our great imperfections, renue vs inwardly more and more, repaire the ruines of our hearts, aid vs againſt the remnants of ſin. Enlarge our hearts to runne the way of thy Commandements, direct all our ſteps in thy word, let none iniquity haue dominion ouer vs. Aſſiſt vs againſt our ſpeciall infirmities and maſter ſins, that we may get the victory ouer them all, to thy glory & the great peace & comfort of our own conſciences. Strengthen vs, good Father,

ther, by thy grace and holy Spirit, against the common corruptions of the world, as pride, whoredome, couetousnes, contempt of thy Gospell, swearing, lying, dissembling, & deceiuing. O deare father, let vs not be ouercome of these filthie vices, nor any other sinfull pleasures and fond delights, wherwith thousands are carried headlong to destructiõ. Arme our soules against all the temptations of this world, the flesh & the diuel; that we may ouercome them all through thy help, and keep on the right way to life; that we may liue in thy fear, & die in thy fauour; that our last daies may be our best daies, and that we may end in great peace of conscience. Furthermore deare Father, we intreat thee not only for our selues, but for all our good brethren thy dear children scattered ouer the face of the whole earth, most humbly beseeching thee to bless thẽ all, to cheer them vp, & glad them with the ioy of thy countenance, both now & alwaies. Guide them all in thy feare, and keep them from euill, that they may praise thy name. In these dangerous daies, and declining times, we pray thee, O Lord, raise vp nursing fathers, and nursing mothers vnto thy Church. Raise vp also faithfull Pastors, that thy cause may be carried forward, Truth may preuaile, Religion may prosper, thy Name only may be set vp in the earth, thy Sonnes Kingdome aduanced, and thy

will

will accomplished. Set thy selfe against all aduersarie power, especially that of Rome, Antichrist, Idolatry and Atheisme; curse and crosse all their counsels, frustrate their deuices, scatter their forces, ouerthrow their armies. When they are most wise, let them be most foolish: when they are most strong, let them be most weake. Let them know that there is no wisedome, nor counsell, power nor policie against thee the Lord of Hosts. Let them know, that *Israel* hath a God, and that thou which art called *Iehouah*, art the onely ruler ouer all the World. Arise therefore, O most mightie God, and maintaine thine owne cause against all thine enemies, smite thorow all their loynes, and bow downe their backs: yea, let them all be confounded and turned backward that bear ill will vnto *Sion*. Let the patient abiding of the righteous be ioy: and let the wicked be disappointed of their hope. But of all fauour, we intreat thee, O Lord, to shew speciall mercy to thy Church in this land wherein we liue. Continue thy Gospell amongst vs yet with greater successe, purge thy house daily more and more, take away all things that offend. Let this nation still be a place where thy name may be called vpon, and an harbour for thy Saints. Shew mercy to our posteritie, deare Father, and haue care of them, that thy Gospell may be left vnto

them

them as a moſt holy inheritance. Defend vs againſt forreine inuaſion, keep out Idolatrie and Poperie from amongſt vs. Turne from vs thoſe plagues which our ſinnes crie for. For the ſins of this Land are exceeding great, horrible, and outragious, and giue thee iuſt cauſe to make vs ſpectacles of thy vengeance to all Nations; that by how much the more thou haſt lifted vs vp in great mercie and long peace, by ſo much the more thou ſhouldeſt preſſe vs downe in great wrath and long war. Therfore, deare Father, we moſt humbly intreat thee, for thy great names ſake, and for thy infinite mercies ſake, that thou wouldſt be reconciled to this Land, & diſcharge it of all the horrible ſins therof. Drown them, O Lord, in thy infinite mercie through Chriſt, as it were in a bottomleſſe gulfe, that they may neuer riſe vp in iudgement againſt vs. For although our ſins be exceeding many, and feareſull, yet thy mercie is farre greater. For thou art infinite in mercie: but we cannot be infinite in ſinning. Giue vs not ouer into the hands of the Idolaters, leſt they ſhould blaſpheme thy name, and ſay, Where is their God in whom they truſted? But rather, deare Father, take vs into thine owni hands, and correct vs according to thy wiſedome: for with thee is mercy, and deep compaſſion. Moreouer, we moſt heartily beſeech thy good Maieſtie, to bleſs our moſt

gracious King *Charles*, and to ſhew much mercy to him in all things. Guide him in thy feare, and keep him in all his waies, working in his ſoule vnfained ſorrow for ſinne, true faith in thy promiſes, & a great care to pleaſe thee in all things, and to diſcharge the duties of his high place, in all zeale of thy glorie, and faithfulnes towards thy Maieſty: that as thou haſt crowned him heere in earth, ſo he (ſpending his daies heere below in thy feare) may after this life be crowned of thee for euer in the Heauens. Wee beſeech thee alſo to bleſs his Maieſties moſt honorable priuie Councellors. Councell them from aboue: let them take aduice of thee in all things, that they may both conſult and reſolue of ſuch courſes as may be moſt for thy glorie, the good of the Church, and peace of this our Commonwealth. Bleſſe the Nobilitie, and all the Magiſtrates of the Land, giuing them all grace to execute iudgement and iuſtice, and to maintaine truth and equitie. Bleſſe all the faithfull Miniſters of the Goſpell, increaſe the number of them, increaſe thy gifts in them, and ſo bleſſe all their labours in their ſeuerall places and congregations, that they all may be initruments of thy hand, to enlarge thy Sonnes kingdome, and to win many vnto thee. Comfort the comfortleſſe with all needfull comforts. Forget none of thine that are in trouble: but as their

afflictions

afflictions are, ſo let the ioyes and comforts of thy ſpirit be vnto them: and ſo ſanctifie vnto all thine their afflictions and troubles, that they may tend to thy glorie, and their owne good. Giue vs thankfull hearts for all thy mercies, both ſpirituall and corporall: for thou art verie merciſull vnto vs in the things of this life, and infinitely more merciſull in the things of a better life. Let vs deepely ponder and weigh all thy particular fauours towards vs: that by the due conſideration thereof, our hearts may be gained yet nearer vnto thee, and that therefore we may both loue and obey thee, becauſe thou art ſo kinde and louing vnto vs: that euen thy loue towards vs, may draw our loue towards thee, and that becauſe mercie is with thee, thou maiſt be feared. Grant theſe things, good Father, and all other needfull graces for our ſoules or bodies, or any of thine throughout the whole World, for Ieſus Chriſts ſake: in whoſe name we further call vpon thee as he hath taught vs in his Goſpell, ſaying,

Our Father which art in heauen, &c.

A Prayer to be vsed at any time, by *one alone priuately.*

O Lord my God and heauenly Father, I thy most vnworthy childe doe heere in thy sight freely confesse, that I am a most sinful creature, and damnable transgressor of all thy holy Lawes and Commandements: that as I was borne and bred in sinne, and stained in the wombe, so haue I continually brought forth the corrupt and vngly fruits of that infection and contagion, wherein I was first conceiued, both in thoughts, words, and workes: If I should goe about to reckon vp my particular offences, I know not where to begin, or where to make an end. For they are more than the haires of my head, yea farre more than I can possibly feele or know. For who knoweth the height and depth of his corruption? Who knoweth how oft he offendeth? Thou onely, O Lord, knowest my sinnes, who knowest my heart; nothing is hid from thee: thou knowest what I haue beene, and what I am: yea my conscience doth accuse me of many and grieuous euills, and I do daily feele by woefull experience how fraile I am, how prone to euill, and how vntoward vnto all goodnesse. My minde is full of vanity: my heart full of prophanenesse, mine affections full of deadnes, dulnes, and drowzines in matters of thy worship and seruice: Yea, my whole soule is full of spirituall blindnesse,

nesse, hardnesse, vnprofitablenesse, colnesse and securite. And in very déed, I am altogether a lump of sin, and a masse of all misery, & therefore I haue forfeited thy fauour, incurred thy high displeasure, & haue giuen thée iust cause to frown vpon me, to giue me ouer, and leaue me to mine own corrupt will and affections. But (O my deare Father) I haue learned from thy mouth that thou art a God full of mercy, slow to wrath, of great compassion and kindnesse, towards all such as groan vnder the burden of their sinnes. Therefore extend thy great mercy towards me poore sinner, and giue me a generall pardon for all mine offences whatsoeuer: seale it in the blood of thy Sonne, and seale it to my conscience by thy Spirit, assuring me more and more of thy loue and fauour towards me, and that thou art a reconciled father vnto me. Grant that I may all time to come, loue thée much, because much is giuen, and of very loue feare thée, and obey thée. O Lord increase my faith, that I may stedfastly beléeue all the promises of the Gospell made in thy Son Christ, and rest vpon them altogether. Enable me to bring forth the sound fruits of faith and repentance in all my particular actions. Fill my soule full of ioy and peace in beléeuing. Fill me full of inward comfort and spirituall strength against all temptations: giue me yet a greater feeling of thy loue and manifold

mercies

mercies towards me; worke in my soule a loue of thy maiestie, a zeale of thy glory, an hatred of euill, and a desire of all good things. Giue me victory ouer those sinnes which thou knowest are strongest in me. Let me once at last make a conquest of the world and the flesh. Mortifie in me whatsoeuer is carnall: sanctifie me throughout by thy spirit: knit my heart to thée for euer, that I may feare thy name, renue in me the Image of thy Sonne Christ daily more and more. Giue mée a delight in the reading and meditation of thy word. Let me reioyce in the publike ministery thereof. Let me loue and reuerence all the faithfull Ministers of thy Gospell. Sanctifie their doctrines to my conscience, seale them in my soule, write them in my heart: giue me a soft and melting heart, that I may tremble at thy words, and be alwayes much affected with godly Sermons. Let not my sinnes hold backe thy mercies from me, nor mine vnworthinesse stop the passage of thy grace. Open mine eyes to see the great wonders of thy Law. Reueale thy secrets vnto me: be open-hearted towards me thy vnworthy seruant. Hide nothing from mée that may make for thy glory, & the good of my soule. Blesse all meanes vnto me which thou blest for my good. Blesse all holy instructions vnto my soule Blesse me at all times, both in hearing and reading thy Word. Giue me the right vse of all

thy mercies and corrections, that I may be the better for them. Let me abound in loue to thy children. Let my heart be very neerly knit vnto them, that where thou louest most, there I may loue most also. Let me watch and pray, that I enter not into temptation: giue me patience and contentment in all things. Let me loue thee more & more, and the world lesse & lesse. So draw my minde vpward, that I may despise all transitory things. Let me be so rapt and rauished with the sight and feeling of heauenly things, that I may make a base reckning of all earthly things. Let me vse this world as though I vsed it not. Let me vse it but for necessity, as meat and drink. Let me not bee carried away with the vaine pleasures and fond delights thereof. God Father work the good worke in me, and neuer leaue me nor forsake me, till thou hast brought me to true happinesse. Oh deare Father, make mee faithfull in my calling, that I may serue thee in it, and be alwaies carefull to do what good I may in any thing. Blesse me in my outward estate. Blesse my soule, body, goods, and name. Blesse all that belongeth vnto me. Blesse my goings out & comings in. Let thy countenance be lifted vp vpon me now and alwaies: cheere me vp with the ioies and comforts of thy spirit: make me thankfull for all thy mercies. For I must needs confesse that thou art very kinde vnto me in all

things

things. For in thée I liue, moue, & haue my being of thée; I haue my welfare and good being: thou art a daily friend, & spectall good benefactor vnto me. I liue at thy cost and charges. I hold all of thée in Chiefe, and I finde that thou art neuer weary of doing me good: thy goodnesse towards me is vnchangeable. Oh, I can neuer be thankfull enough vnto thée for all thy mercies, both spirituall and corporall. But in such measure as I am able, I praise thy name for all, beseeching thée to accept of my thanksgiuing, in thy Son Christ, & to giue me a profitable vse of all thy fauors, that thereby my heart may be fully drawn vnto thée: giue me, O father, to be of such a good nature and disposition, that I may be wonne by gentlenesse and faire meanes, as much as if thou ganest me many lashes. Pardon all mine vnthankfulnesse, vnkindnesse, and great abusing of thy mercies, and giue me grace to vse them more to thy glory in all time to come. Strengthen me, deare father, thus to continue praysing and glorifying thy name héere vpon earth, that after this life I may be crowned of thée forever in thy Kingdome. Grant these petitions, most merciful God, not onely to me, but to all thy deare children throughout the whole world, for Iesus Christs sake: in whose name I doe further call vpon thée, saying as he hath taught me, O our Father, which art in heauen, &c.

FINIS.